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C. Peet.

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ΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ.

Presented by

Mary H. P. Bixby

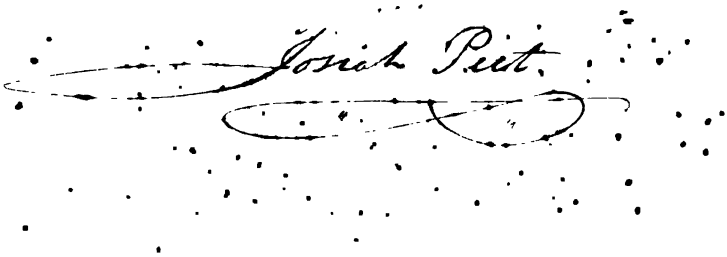
MEMOIR,

WITH SERMONS,

OF

REV. JOSIAH PEET.

Sincerely Yours
Josiah Pitt


Josiah Peet

MEMOIR,

WITH SERMONS,

OF

REV. JOSIAH PEET.

BY

REV. DAVID SHEPLEY.

Prayer ardent opens Heaven.—Young.

NEW YORK:
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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1854, by
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The Gift
of
Mrs. Mary H. P. Dixey, Keeseville, N. Y.
Rec'd Nov. 15, 1871.

To Mrs. Sarah J. Peet.

Affection for yourself, not less than reverence and love for your late husband, has rendered pleasant the labor of preparing this memorial. To you whose is the property in the work, and who know, far better than another can tell, the varied and many excellencies of the subject of it, and who largely contributed, during all the years of his public life, to his happiness, honor, and usefulness, it is humbly dedicated, by your much and long obliged friend,

THE COMPILER.

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MEMOIR.

MEMOIR OF REV. JOSIAH PEET.

CHAPTER I.

FROM HIS BIRTH TO THE TIME OF HIS SETTLEMENT AT NORRIDGEWOCK.

The Christian minister, who, in the first half of the nineteenth century, has, for the space of near forty years, held one of the more intelligent congregations of New England, is, by this fact, distinguished from the greater part of his brethren in the same work. And if, during that period, his ministry has, more and more, commended itself to his people, as shining with a strong and steady radiance, and, notwithstanding that they may not have been insensible to the infirmities and disabilities consequent necessarily upon age, they have still to the last, increasingly revered, trusted and loved him; he must have been, in some respects, a remarkable man, possessing capital elements for influence. The life

of such a minister can scarcely fail to be instructive and profitable; and the more so, if he has gained, and retained his power over his people, by maintaining for himself the favorable verdict of their good sense and their piety, and not by gratifying their pride; if his success has been attributable to no brilliant parts, but only to the possession of such qualities as most ministers may hope, by the Divine grace, to obtain. Perhaps the man has never lived, who, more rigidly than the subject of this memoir, adhered to the inspired maxim: "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." Now that he is gone far away from the scenes in which he has long moved, it is lawful for his friends, for such as come after him in the momentous work of the Christian ministry, and for all the good, to seek profit from his example. This narrative is, however, to be regarded chiefly as a monumental tribute, having its origin in the affection of the family and particular friends of its subject. The design is, in these chapters to trace his general course through life, in such connections, and with such materials, as are best adapted to illustrate the character of his personal piety. For this it was, as will be found, which gave distinction to the late Pastor of Norridgewock and spiritual Patriarch of the county of Somerset.

Josiah Peet was born in Bethlehem, Connecticut, June 21, 1780. He was the last born of the children of Benjamin Peet. His grandfather's name was Richard Peet. His great-grandfather, Benjamin Peet, emigrated from England, and became one of the first settlers of Stratford, Connecticut. His mother was Elizabeth Hendee, daughter of Joshua Hendee, through the maternal line of ancestry, a descendant of the well-known family of Huntington, at Norwich, and niece of Eleazer Wheelock, founder, and first President, of Dartmouth College. He had three brothers, of whom Abijah and Wheelock lived to rear families; and three sisters, all of whom were married while he was yet young. His father, when he was six years of age, removed from Connecticut, and established himself, with his family, at West Haven, Vermont. During several years of his minority, Josiah resided in the family of his brother, Abijah, on a farm in Fair Haven. As a youth, he was remarkable for truth, conscientiousness, and fidelity. It was enough, if he was once instructed in what was expected from him. However varied or numerous the particular duties devolved on him, each one, it was certain, would receive his attention. At twenty years of age, he became hopefully the subject of renewing grace; and soon after, a member of the Congregational church

in Fair Haven. Previous to his indulging hope of pardon through Christ, it pleased God, the better to prepare him for his own service, to give him, for a long time, most clear and distressing views of the enmity, malignity, and utter vileness of the human heart, and of the sinner's entire helplessness and dependence on sovereign mercy. He seemed to be never after a man of the world. Two years subsequently, persuaded it was his duty, he could not be satisfied without an effort to prepare himself to preach the everlasting Gospel, and labor to pluck souls, as brands from the burnings. There were formidable obstacles to be met and overcome. He had lived twenty-two years without literary habits; his health seemed to be precarious; he was without patrimony, and without friends who could materially aid him. Education Societies, then, did not exist. But his mind was settled. He applied himself to study, and became a member of the class which, in the autumn of 1804, entered Middlebury College. Here he was reputed a young man of correct taste, a well balanced mind, respectable scholarship, and great moral worth. He experienced, uniformly, paternal kindness from his instructors, was universally beloved by his fellow students, and esteemed in the community at Middlebury.

But his college life was spent in almost incessant

struggles, of great severity, with poverty, impaired health, and mental disquietudes. Several times he was, for weeks, prostrated by sickness. To obtain the means of support, we find him each year absent from college, for about four months, employed as a teacher of youth. He saw the great advantages that are consequent upon early literary training; and could but lament what he regarded as his own lost years. He had a mind that could readily appreciate decided scholarship, the power of easy and rapid acquisition, the workings of commanding intellect and splendid genius; and he was ever prone to be dissatisfied with himself. In the schools and in professional life, we usually find the happy and self-complacent; and those who highly appreciate excellence, and plainly show that they would be glad to exhibit more of it, if it were in their power. Mr. Peet belonged to the last-named class. It is doubtful whether, while in college, or at any subsequent period, any effort of his was entirely approved to his own mind.

Still, poverty, ill health, and what he regarded as his intellectual deficiencies, occasioned him sufferings far less severe, than those he experienced from apprehensions that his pride was not subdued, and that his heart was in a state of insurrection against his Maker.

In March of the year 1806, he commenced a regular journal, which he continued, with slight interruptions, till the close of life. Some extracts will illustrate the preceding statements, and develope his spiritual experience. From the 29th of March to the 18th of April, he was sick of typhus fever. Under the date of July 14th of that year, he writes thus:

Being sensible that I have, for some time past, indulged myself in too much levity and vain conversation, I do this day resolve before God, that with his grace assisting, I will endeavor to be more circumspect and sober minded.

August 12th. Received news that my father was at the point of death, and desired me to go home. Accordingly, I left college and went home; but found my father better. He soon so far recovered that I returned to college, not, however, without anxiety from various sources.

November. Subject to despondence, arising from the embarrassments of my pecuniary condition, and from a sense of my responsibility; also, my inability to meet public expectation, and discharge duty. But, more, it arises from a want of trust in God, which, were it exercised, would prevent all unwarrantable anxiety.

During the winter he had the charge of a public school in Orwell.

Feb. 18th, 1807. Early this morning I was sent for to go home and witness my father's death, as he was expected soon to breathe his last. I returned immediately with the messenger, but when I arrived he had been dead about an hour. This was six days after I saw him in health. On the Sunday before, he was

violently seized with an influenza, which so cramped and overpowered the feeble efforts of decayed nature, that he was bereft of reason most of the time till his death.

Feb. 20*th.* On this day my father's funeral was attended. A sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Higly, from 1 Cor. 7: 29—"But this I say, brethren, the time is short." My father lacked but thirteen months of fourscore years.

March 16*th.* Returned once more to college, having been absent nearly four months.

April 23*d.* Taken ill of an influenza.

May 6*th.* Vacation commenced, but, being out of health, I remained at college for several days.

May 13*th.* Health improved in a degree. Set out for Addison. Felt sensibly affected with some expressions of friendship and kindness made me this morning; and, I trust, in some measure thankful and humble before God, that he had disposed any, at any time, and especially at this time, to be friendly to one so undeserving. On my way I had many reflections. I felt, in some measure, the necessity of the continual protection and blessing of the Almighty, wherever I am. I reflected on his goodness, that I had already experienced, and was affected by it. I had an earnest desire that God would take me wholly under his care; that he would preserve me in his fear, and from danger through this and my remaining days; that his blessing might attend me in whatever condition; and, should it be his holy pleasure, that he would restore me to health, and prepare me to resume my studies with renewed vigor; and that he would enable me to be more faithfully devoted to his service, and make better improvement in science and divine things than heretofore.

Near the close of May he returned to Middlebury, still in a condition of great bodily debility.

Sabbath, June 7th. Was permitted to mingle with God's people, and unite in partaking of the holy symbols of the body and

blood of our crucified, but now ascended and glorified Redeemer. But I mourn that I am so little affected with a sense of my sins and unworthiness, the sufferings of my Saviour, and his unspeakable dying love. I pray God to forgive all my sins, and grant me his Holy Spirit to sanctify my heart, to convict me of the criminality of my conduct, to lead me to penitence, to awaken me from stupidity, to warm and animate my affections, and to work in me the spirit and temper of his children.

June 23*d*. My birth-day has passed without my noticing it, so fleeting is time, and so regardless am I of the rapidity of its flight. May this admonish me that the day of my death may come when I as little expect it.

July 3*d*. My room-mate appears to be seriously impressed with the importance of religion. For some days I have felt interested for him and for myself. Felt more than usually the reasonableness and importance of embracing religion in youth.

It is a noticeable fact that even at this early period of his life, whenever he was brought into close proximity with impenitent individuals, whether as fellow lodgers, or at a boarding-house, or in schools of youth under his instruction, their conversion to Christ was a usual occurrence.

July 14*th*. This morning had such a sense of my nothingness, and unworthiness, and imperfections, that I could not but abhor myself. My unfaithfulness and stupidity in discharging my duty, and in improving God's mercies, was a cause for humiliation. The improvement I make in science and divine things appeared so small, that I seemed to have little courage to pursue my studies. I felt that should God continue my life and privileges, I had very little prospect that I should ever be of any service to his cause in the world, or comfort to my friends. Under these impressions I retired and confessed before God, that I was

indeed an unprofitable servant; and acknowledged his justice, which I in some measure felt, should he cast me off from his presence for ever. I besought his gracious forgiveness and acceptance, through Jesus Christ, that he would sanctify my heart and heal my infirmities, and aid me by his grace to be more faithful in his service, to gain useful knowledge, and make some good progress in the divine life; that he would make his strength perfect in my weakness, that I might not be suffered to live in vain. I desired to commit every concern unto him; besought that he would order every affair and event respecting me in mercy, and not according to my desires, should they be selfish or wicked; and, in fine, I desired submission and resignation to his holy will.

In December, 1807, he again took charge of a school in Orwell, in which he was occupied till March of the following year. He had now acquired reputation as a teacher, and was solicited to take the charge of a public seminary, which had for some time been in existence at Castleton. He writes, March 12th, 1808:

I resisted the solicitation, not willing to lose my last summer in college, from which I had contemplated much satisfaction and profit. I accordingly returned to Middlebury.

The Trustees of the Institution, nevertheless, renewed their solicitations; and, by the advice of friends and the officers of college, he reversed his former decision, and acceded to their wishes. During his first quarter, as Principal at Castleton, in

poor health, and with the duties of teaching, and preparing for examination, and Commencement at Middlebury, pressing him, his spirits seemed to have been desponding. Having in August following, terminated, with honor, his connections with college, he continued at Castleton, four quarters longer, till June 14, 1809. He was successful, as a teacher. The Institution flourished under his administration; and in improved health, and enjoying the unqualified respect and affection of the community in which he moved, his spirits were more buoyant; and he left Castleton, not without regret. Several of his pupils, while in his school, became hopefully pious.

June 24th, 1809, he became a member of the Theological Seminary at Andover, being then 29 years of age. He left Vermont, travelling on horseback, and arrived the fourth day from the time of setting out. The Seminary was then in its infancy, having been in operation but about one year. His was the second class; containing twenty-four students. Here he suffered less from ill health, and less from pecuniary embarrassments, than he had done in college. He was able, consequently, to devote himself more unremittingly to study, than he had done at any former period of his life. He was very much favored in his boarding-house, which

was retired and romantic in its situation; and the members of the family at which, he soon found, to be much to his mind. As was almost universal with the students of the Seminary, of that day, he had a passionate affection for what was then denominated "the Institution," and for its professors. This affection was not unreasonable; for, though the Seminary was then young, as to age, it was born in a state of mellow and vigorous manhood. Spent in these circumstances, he was ever wont to look back upon his days at Andover, as among the most sunny of his life. And yet his course was still a struggle. However satisfied with things about him, he could not be satisfied with himself. There is manifestly advance in his spiritual views and experience. While he devoted himself assiduously to his studies, and did not, as some young men injudiciously do, spend in active labor the time which they should give to preparation for labor; Providence was, almost constantly, making him spiritually useful to fellow-beings thrown in his way, and brought under his influence. For these tokens of the Divine favor he was devoutly thankful; but still he longed, and still he mourned. The extracts from his journal that follow, show that, in his view, literary training is not the only preparation necessary for the ministry. Were all who are now pursuing Theological studies,

as attentive as he was, to their souls, and as much given to prayer, what bright prospects would open for the churches and the world! And observing the maturity of his views of the great work before him, and of the qualifications requisite for its performance, we can scarcely regret that his professional training was delayed, till he was of an age at which maturity is possible.

> "Ah! wherefore in such haste in men's sight to appear?
> The cedar yields no fruit, until its fiftieth year."

July 22d, 1809, he alludes to various things in his condition, as calling for thankfulness. He mentions the family with which he boarded, in which were two young persons, who, though moral and amiable, lacked the one thing needful. "I longed to see them thoughtful, and embracing religion; but being faithless, I am also unfaithful, though I sometimes converse with them." He alludes to groves in the vicinity.

They are equal to any thing my imagination has ever pictured from romantic descriptions. These it has been my practice to frequent at an early hour in the morning, sometimes while it has been yet almost dark; here to spend a contemplative hour, listen to the songster's morning lay, to catch the first beams of the rising sun, and also to seek the God of Grace, who, though he dwells beyond the "everlasting hills," deigns to bless the groves and the humble vale. This many have witnessed, and this I might have experienced, had I possessed a heart warmed with

heavenly love, sensibilities awake, not only to the beauties of nature and the divine perfections displayed in her works, but to the unceasing and immeasurable goodness of the God of love, which overspreads the earth and constantly encircles me. Some comfortable seasons I have enjoyed; but much I have to mourn an unfeeling heart. My obligations to be devoted to God appeared very great.

August 23*d*. I have been off my guard, and in conversation have offended a brother; in consequence of which, I here resolve that I will be more watchful over my thoughts, and endeavor to restrain improper or ill-timed observations, that I offend not in word.

August 26*th*. At our weekly meeting, by reason of pride and diffidence, had my feelings mortified; and I hope it will tend to humble me, and teach me the necessity of having the pride of my heart subdued, and lead me to put that confidence in God, that will cause me to triumph over that diffidence and bashfulness which have characterized me through life, and been a great detriment to my improvement as well as comfort. A degree of modesty and self-distrust may not be highly criminal, if accompanied with the counterpart, confidence and strength in God; but without the latter, I have reason to think it originates in pride or the fear of man, which bringeth a snare.

Sabbath, 27*th*. Dr. Griffin's preaching was instructive, soul-humbling, and God-exalting; and, though it seemed to pierce between joints and marrow, yet I felt more strength for several days after, and more engagedness in the things of religion.

During the autumnal vacation, 1809, he remained at Andover. A revival of religion at the time existed in the South parish, in promoting which he was active and interested. A number of young people were the subjects of the work; with

others, both the young persons at his boarding-house, before mentioned in his journal.

January 1st, 1810. God has not only spared my life, but he has given me health through all the past year, and has not for once laid me on a bed of sickness. He has not continued me in the circumstances in which the commencement of the last year found me, but has placed me in those as different as they are more pleasant. He has freed me from those avocations which, for more than a year, engrossed and fatigued my mind, and filled it with anxious concern; and has brought me through various scenes, and placed me in a condition highly eligible for becoming acquainted with his holy word, for serving him, and for improving in the divine life. He has spread out his bounty, and he admits me to partake of it without money and without price, and he demands my whole heart, and the devotion of all my time, and the exertion of my talents in his service: and it is right he should have them, for they are not my own.

As I enter on a new year, I feel it important to adopt the following resolutions, which I hope to keep, if I may have divine assistance.

Resolved, That I will endeavor to avoid light and vain conversation, to which I am much inclined, and much exposed in a society so agreeable and friendly. I find the practice hostile to improvement and religious feeling.

By divine assistance, I will endeavor to live nearer to God, by a more feeling and careful discharge of duty, as far as I can discover it.

I will endeavor carefully to notice the Providences of God, that I may know how he is dealing with me, and thereby be enabled to learn what is duty.

January 4th. Found, this day, notwithstanding my resolutions, an inclination to be light in conversation, and ere I was aware indulged it to an extent that caused me pain; and from some improper feelings and deportment, was led to an humbling

sense of my imperfections. I now again see the need of continual watchfulness, or resolutions will naught avail, but inclinations, passions, and imperfections will hurry me into sin. I therefore resolve, by Divine assistance, that I will be sober and watch unto prayer.

June 6th. The rod which has been suspended over us in a threatening attitude has fallen. It has smitten our beloved brother, and removed the flower of the Institution. The providence of God in this event is viewed by us with amazement. God's way is in the deep waters, but justice is his habitation and righteousness his sceptre. Another brother is struggling with the same disease. My earnest prayer all this day has been, that I may hear this call, and the effect be, to bring me near to God.

The death above referred to was that of Lewis Le Count Congar, one of five young men, who accompanied Dr. Griffin from New Jersey to the seminary at Andover. He was a young man of singular promise.

Sabbath, 7th. Funeral exercises. I felt a desire to be thoroughly engaged in religion, to feel its power continually. Unless I could attain to this, it appeared to me I did not wish ever to be a minister of the Gospel.

Jan. 9th. My feelings this day very tender. I can hardly discriminate so as to determine what particular view caused my tears to flow; yet they flowed freely. Many things pressed themselves upon my mind: that I might be freed from sin and live a holy life—the cause of Christ—an awakening in this place —that certain individuals might be blessed of God.

Jan. 13th. Felt some tenderness this morning both in public and social prayers. My spirits were in some measure depressed, by reason of some peculiar trials. If I ever have experienced the grace of God, my heart is yet unsubdued. More trials than

every one has, are necessary to subdue my proud, rebellious heart. In addition to having had a thorn in my flesh all my life, I am, at this time, exercised with a peculiar trial, known to myself and to him who hath appointed it. How long it is to continue, or what will be the effect of it, I know not. If God enables me, by grace, to improve it, it will profit me, otherwise it will be injurious. I think I wish to submit, and exercise proper feelings, but presume I do not.

Jan. 14th. The state of my mind, and the considerations mentioned yesterday, induced me to spend much time this day in secret prayer. Something of a childlike temper, I thought, I felt, as I seemed more willing to leave myself in the hands, and at the disposal of a wise and good Providence.

Feb. 4th. Such a day as I have never before had. Whether under the influence of God's Spirit, or the subject of delusion, I cannot tell. I hope the former. When I arose, my mind was peculiarly solemn and burdened with sin. If I ever desired that God would interpose for me, it has been this day. Never before have I so sensibly felt how blessed it would be to be delivered from sin. I seemed unwilling to leave my closet; my whole soul agitated through the day. I sincerely desired that God would make me wholly his own, and that he would guide me in every single step of my course.

Nov. 20th. I find much evidence of pride of heart, which embarrasses me in the discharge of public duty. I enjoy better spirits than I have done. Am inclined to think that my depression of mind is attributable in part to ill health and constitutional defects.

Dec. 6th. Had a deep sense of my vileness and worthlessness. Still I have a faint hope in God, my only helper, and desire to cast myself on him for succor.

He preached, for the first time, in Haverhill, Mass., May 4, 1811, having been licensed by the Haverhill Association, met in Bradford, on the 13th of March, in

that year. On the 24th of September, in the year 1811, his connection with the Seminary was terminated. From that time till about the middle of December following, he was employed to preach at Chester, and at Durham, in New Hampshire. During the year 1812, and the first part of the year following, he preached acceptably and usefully, as stated supply, chiefly in Shoreham, Vermont, near to his family relatives. Here he had occasion for the exercise of wisdom, as an excellent minister had recently been forcibly ejected from his place, against the wishes of a large portion of the people, in consequence of which much excited feeling existed.

March 15th, 1812. I bless God for a heart that can feel, and eyes that can weep. Still I must have care, that my feelings do not gain the ascendency over my reason. If they do, and disturb my peace, let me contemplate nobler objects. Let me think of God, and Christ, and perishing souls; think of missionaries, those especially who have left the dearest earthly objects, to see them no more in this world, and to hear from them but seldom. I must repress personal sorrows, by enlarged views and the aids of religion.

May 10*th.* I would not be my own director. Whenever I discover any indications of Providence, that seem to mark out my path, it gives me pleasure to notice them, and strengthens my desire, that he will order all my way. I hope, I shall ever see his guiding hand, and follow where it leads. Sensible I am, and hope always to feel, that the course he marks out is the best, and that there is neither safety nor peace in any other.

The following are from letters written by him, at this period:—

SHOREHAM, *May* 24, 1812.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you are endeavoring to live near to God. If you do, I think duty will be made plain. Cease not to pray while you examine yourself. I am glad that you contemplate offering yourself for admission to the Church. I believe it to be your duty to do it, or give up your hope; not standing longer between the armies of the Lord, and the camp of the enemy; unwilling to be classed with either. Will you go back to the world? If not; if the Lord be the God you wish to follow, why not come out on his side? Ashamed to own your Lord? You are afraid you have not sufficient evidence that you are a Christian, and so shall dishonor the cause you would espouse. Perhaps you had better feel so than otherwise. I hope you will be faithful in examining yourself; but I think you should not reject rational evidence, nor despise the day of small things. If you have a single spark of true love for Christ, you ought to confess him, and acknowledge his grace in giving it. If you feel one glow of Christian affection for one of Christ's disciples, you should walk as a disciple. I am glad you feel it to be an important matter. We ought so to view it. But where shall we go, if not to Christ? What business have we in his world, unless engaged in his cause? What have we to ask, but to honor his name? I hope you will be enabled to leave yourself with God, find all your doubts removed, your path of duty plain, and Christ precious to your soul as he is to them that believe.

WEST HAVEN, *Jan.* 22, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

The events, which I shall notice in this letter, must furnish my only apology for my long silence. Ten days ago, I was called to part with a dear brother, by death. He fell a victim to a mortal epidemic, which has been commissioned by a righteous Sovereign, to cut down many in this place. It is supposed to be the spotted fever. It has, already, made surprising

inroads upon this people, and spreads consternation in its way. In this small town, twelve grown persons have been cut off within five weeks; and I presume not less than thirty have been taken with the disease. Almost every house has been converted into a hospital. In one family, which I visited, five were sick—three in one room. I can scarcely describe the scene. In the darkened room, two or three men were employed attending them, and here and there an amazed spectator was gazing on them in silence. Beyond all expectations, these are in a fair way to recover. Among the victims were a young married couple, with whom I was formerly intimate. When the husband died, the wife was in health. In a week after, with an infant on each arm, she was consigned to the grave. Her father, and her mother, followed in quick succession. There is no evidence, that any of them were prepared. The neighbor that made the coffin for my brother, and assisted in laying his corpse into it, was in just a week from that hour himself laid in a coffin. As the disease is supposed to be contagious, assistance is obtained with difficulty. A neighboring minister and some aged Christians have been around, visiting and praying with the dying and the mourning. Such a day as this, I never before witnessed. A general alarm is excited, and happy would it be, should it result in a turning to the Lord. My brother left us comfortable evidence that he was prepared for a better world.

Immediately on learning that he was at the point of death, I repaired to West Haven. I found, also, that his wife had been taken, the day before, with the same disease. Their eldest daughter, too, was unwell; and towards morning I was awakened by the cries of a little boy, who had just been taken. I devoted myself to my brother almost entirely, day and night, till the fourth morning, when I closed his eyes. The night following, I had scarcely retired to rest, when I was suddenly arrested by the groans of the other daughter, upon whom the disease had fixed. To her my attention was then unremittingly devoted till Saturday, when another niece, who had come to assist us, was taken ill. Since that time my task has been to nurse these two

nieces. Such was our situation, that neither wife, mother, sister, nor child could follow the remains of my brother to the grave. I followed him, with the remote connections.

Sabbath, Jan. 31*st*, 1813. Yesterday, as I commenced a funeral sermon, I was requested to preach at the funeral of another man, the same day. This Sabbath presented such a scene as I never before witnessed. Two mourning circles brought in their dead, and placed them side by side. I began meeting, and during the first singing, was surprised to find the bell still tolling, but concluded it was through mistake. As I was rising for prayer, the door opened, and another corpse was brought in, of which I had not received previous notice. Almost the whole of the large assembly seemed to be dressed in mourning. I found myself called to address a congregation composed of the dead, and the dying, mourning living. The dead helped me to preach to the living. For several weeks I have been walking in the midst of death. Unless God command the destroying angel, he only knows how many more, or who, must fall.

His brother, whose death is mentioned in the letter, was one with whom, for several years, he had lived. The nieces, whom he left weeping, because he was obliged to take himself from them, and return to his work in Shoreham, recovered. But another affliction awaited him. His mother, an excellent woman, died August 16th, 1813, aged 79 years. This event he thus notices:

Set out for Middlebury with a view to commencement. Arrived at West Haven in the evening, where, to my great surprise, I was informed that my mother was dead. This was unexpected intelligence, as I had not heard of her illness. Not three weeks had elapsed since I left her in her usual health. She fol-

lowed me out and observed: "It is not probable we shall meet again in this world." But expecting soon to return, I hoped it would be otherwise. Alas! her prediction proved too true. Her spirit had taken its flight, four hours before I arrived. A messenger had been dispatched for me, but I had missed of him, so that I had received no intimation of her death till I arrived. Her illness, which lasted about a fortnight, she bore with much composure, meekness, and pleasantness, often manifesting her concern that she should make trouble, and expressing her sense of the kindness with which she was treated, and the great mercies which she received, and that so many of her children could be with her. Though she had for years entertained a hope of being a subject of grace, and had professed religion, yet she had been subject to many doubts and fears respecting her state. She uniformly entertained low views of her attainments, mourned over her stupidity, and thought that a person whose views were no more clear and exalted, and whose affections were so languid, could have no religion. Her hopes appeared to brighten, in some degree, before her death. After expressing great distress from faintness, and want of breath, she expired this day, at four o'clock, P. M., in the eightieth year of her age.

Thus she who gave me birth has fallen asleep in death, and, I trust, in Jesus. No longer may I continue to answer, when questioned for my parents, "I have a mother living."

The reader will not fail to notice, in the mother, the tendencies and traits of character, which were prominently developed in the son.

He was invited to preach on probation, at Rupert, in Vermont, at Abington, in Massachusetts, and at Wells, in Maine, but for reasons deemed by him sufficient, he declined. He first visited Nor-

ridgewock, Oct. 29, 1813. The following, though in the third person, is from his own pen:

He visited the place, sent by the Maine Missionary Society, for two weeks. At the close of worship on the second Sabbath, it being understood that he was to leave next day, a voluntary contribution was taken of $10 for the Missionary Society. But his detention a day or two by a storm, gave rise to an effort to detain him longer. A number of the Church and some others were collected together, who, after consultation, raised a subscription of $150 for the purpose of obtaining his labors, half the time, till it should be exhausted; with the design that the Missionary Society should employ him the other half in the vicinity. The Society accorded with the measure; and he proceeded to labor alternately in the town, and the vicinity.

On the twenty-third of April, eighteen hundred fourteen, the Church passed a unanimous vote to give him a call to become their pastor, and to labor with them such portion of the year as they should be able to sustain him. And the town, at a subsequent meeting, concurred, and voted to give him two hundred dollars annually, and be entitled to his services two-fifths of the time, provided that the Missionary Society would employ him the remainder, in the vicinity. The Society approved of the plan, and proposed to allow him to spend half the time in Norridgewock.

CHAPTER II.

AT NORRIDGEWOCK HALF THE TIME.

Mr. Peet was ordained and installed pastor of the Congregational Church at Norridgewock, August 4th, 1814, being then thirty-four years of age. Rev. D. Lovejoy offered the introductory prayer; Rev. Dr. Jenks, of Bath, preached the sermon; Rev. Jotham Sewall led in the ordaining prayer; Rev. Dr. Gillet gave the charge to the pastor; Rev. Fifield Holt the hand of fellowship; Rev. J. Ward addressed the people; and Rev. Dr. Tappan offered the concluding prayer. Rev. D. Thurston was scribe of council.

On the 8th of September, 1814, he was married to Miss Sarah A. Herrick, daughter of Mr. Edward Herrick, of Wilton, N. H., and niece and adopted daughter of Ephraim Abbot, Esq., of Andover, Mass., in whose family she had been brought up. She was one of the young persons of the family

with which Mr. Peet had boarded at Andover, and to his influence, as a means, she attributed her conversion to Christ.

Having once more, in company with his wife, visited his friends in Vermont, he returned to make his permanent residence with the people now regarded by him as his people, and for whom already he cherished an affection which none but a pastor can fully appreciate, but without which he would most miserably fail in discharging duty and encountering toil, for the salvation of his charge. Norridgewock was an important, and, in many respects, a desirable location. It contained, in 1814, a population of about one thousand. The village, thirty-two miles from Augusta, situated on the north side of the Kennebec, on a level plain, with a spacious street densely shaded by trees of various kinds, with highlands on the opposite side of the river, was even then of remarkable beauty. The inhabitants were intelligent and urbane, partaking, in their manners and habits, of the gracefulness of the natural scenery of the locality. Being the shire town of the County of Somerset, which was established in 1809, it had importance in its relations to the vicinity. The Church contained forty-three members. Though organized in 1797, it had till now continued without a pastor; and in the

town there had been but occasional preaching. When Mr. Peet first visited the place, he found the people discouraged from repeated disappointments in their attempts to settle a minister, and from existing divisions and alienations among themselves. With great energy and exemplary wisdom, he applied himself to the work of imparting courage to their spirits, and of healing their divisions. In this work he was eminently successful; and now the word began to be attended with the influences of the Holy Spirit, making it of saving efficacy.

He had been in the place but a short time, when there appeared an increased attention to religion among the people. The members of the Church were revived, conferences were appointed, were thronged by the youth and others, and were solemn. Numbers of the impenitent were soon found in an inquiring state, and conversions followed. The distress of some, convicted of sin, was unusual, and their joy proportional. The work was not extensive, but it was genuine. The accessions to the Church from the fruits of the work, were important from their number, but more so from the character of those who became members. One of these was a man in middle life, engaged extensively in business, of great energy and large influence in society. He had before been a man of the world, intoxicated

with military honors; but the change in him was decisive. He seemed to give himself wholly to Christ, at once surrendered his military office, purchased Scott's family Bible, and erected the domestic altar, and for many years, with a singular constancy, fidelity, and liberality, with a few associates of like spirit, aided his minister, and labored for Christ's kingdom. Before receiving a call to settle, Mr. Peet had spent fifteen weeks in Norridgewock, and preached forty-five times; in Waterville two weeks, and preached six times; in Madison four weeks, and preached thirteen times; in Solon four weeks, and preached twelve times; one week at Anson, and preached six times; one week in Starks, and preached four times. He had preached also once in Mercer, and one Sabbath in Bloomfield.

For a period of twelve years, his people sustained him, and were entitled to his services, for half of the time. He was sometimes absent, laboring in destitute places, for successive weeks; but his custom was to preach at home on alternate Sabbaths. On the Sabbaths intervening, meetings were well sustained, generally by members of the church, at which sermons were read; though not unfrequently his place was supplied by a minister of another denomination. Public worship, at this period, was held in the meet-

ing-house, during the warm season, and in the old court-house, in the winter. His lectures at private dwellings were generally not written, as was the fact as to the conclusion of many of his discourses on the Sabbath. Many, who were then youth, can now well remember how their minds were wrought upon by the pungency of his exhortations, and the affectionate earnestness of his entreaty; especially in the court-house, where, the people being seated in mass, there was some descent from the stateliness of worship in the meeting-house.

"The pastor rose
And looked upon his flock—and with an eye
That told his interest, and voice that spoke
In tremulous accents, eloquence like Paul's,
He lent Isaiah's fire to the truths
Of Revelation, and persuasion came
Like gushing waters from his lips, till hearts
Unused to bend, were softened, and the eye
Unwont to weep, sent forth the willing tear."

He was indefatigable in pastoral labors, never neglecting the sick and the sorrowing; he wrote as many sermons in the year as can properly be expected of any minister; and, except that he was absent half of the Sabbaths, which were thereby rendered less cheerful and inviting, he performed, at home, all the labor which would have been

asked of him by his people, had he been wholly in their employ.

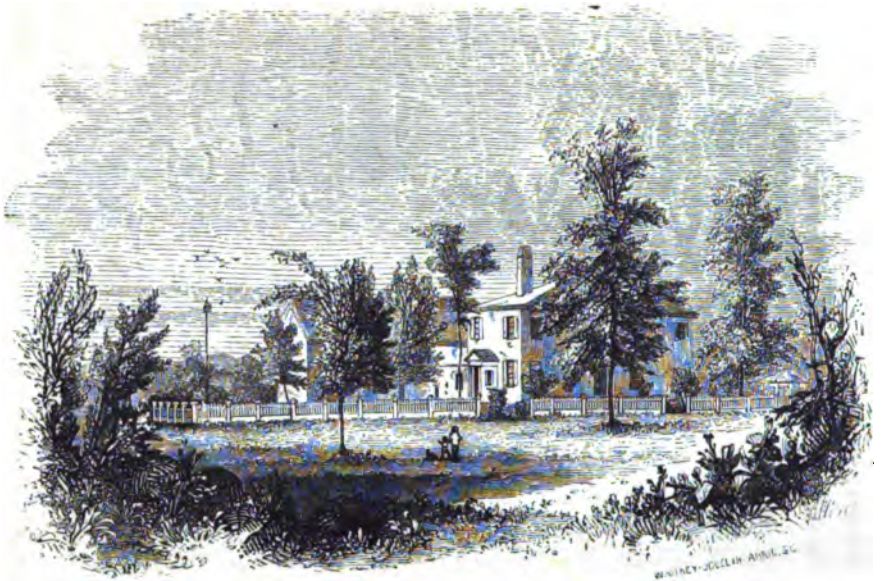
He early introduced the observance of the monthly concert of prayer, at which the average contribution, annually, was about fifteen dollars, though the attendants and contributors were very few in number. He interested himself early in promoting religious reading among his people. The Boston Recorder, the Panoplist, the Religious Intelligencer, and the Christian Spectator, published at New Haven, were by his agency extensively circulated and read in the town. In the year 1814, seven were admitted to the church. In 1815, he warmly co-operated with others, of like mind with himself, in the organization of a County Society for the Reformation of Morals; special reference being had to the alarming increase of intemperance, and the profanation of the holy Sabbath. About the same time, he organized, among his own people, a Library Association, and also a female Tract Society.

During this year, having obtained for himself about twelve acres of land eligibly situated, he erected for himself a dwelling-house, not extravagant in extent or style of finish, yet sufficiently spacious, commodious and comely, at an expense of near two thousand dollars. This was the most hazardous pecuniary enterprise in which he ever embarked.

He had meditated the erection of a small and cheap edifice; but his friends encouraged him to enlarge his plans, and offered him their credit. But with a support scarcely sufficient to meet the current expenses of his family, the cold seasons now occurring, corn entirely cut off, flour fifteen dollars per barrel, and wheat two dollars and a half a bushel, how could he possibly liquidate a debt of the magnitude of that now incurred? The highest praise is due to the citizens of Norridgewock, who, seeing the embarrassing circumstances of his condition, whether they belonged to his society, or not, of their own accord, raised funds by subscription, and, in a manner the most delicate possible, relieved him of the greater part of his burden; so that his property was made free from incumbrances, and his debts rendered such as to be manageable. As he was always punctiliously faithful in meeting engagements, his credit was always good; still, during most of his ministry, he was straitened in his current means, which was to him a source of great perplexity and much suffering; and his supplies came to him in a manner, and at junctures so opportune, that he often attributed them, and with sufficient reason, to nothing other than the interpositions of Heaven in answer to prayer. He would, sometimes, in conversation with his family, palliate the impru-

dence of having erected so expensive a dwelling, by suggesting that it might probably soon become the habitation of a successor in office, who might need accommodations as good as he had provided. The event proved, that he was destined to be the owner of the mansion, and the chief inhabitant of the dwelling, till, in a good old age, he was removed to a mansion in the skies. And none who are interested, and have been familiar with that mansion, have, on the whole, regretted, or ever can regret, that he erected it. It has been a family residence, the like to which, in all respects, in the blessings within, are but rarely found on earth.

His family early consisted of four members; and, very soon, six or eight were but a usual number. Many young persons, of both sexes, have had a residence in his family for longer or shorter periods; and, to all who were inmates of his dwelling, how paternal was his heart, and how paternal were his words! He never suffered any long period to elapse, without conversing with them on the subject of their eternal interests; and how fervent were his prayers each morning and evening, that each of the family might be saved! He had personal conflicts and official anxieties; but these he seldom permitted so much as to cast a shadow over his countenance in his family; and never were children, whether of



MR. PEET'S FAMILY MANSION.

other parents, who dwelt with him, or his own, in after time, more pleased, than when he could command time for mingling in the conversation of his family and directing it. The youth of the town loved to visit at his house; and all visitors of whatever age, were sure to wish, as often as possible, to repeat their visits.

On the 23d of August, 1815, he was called with his wife to witness the distressing death of their first child, an infant daughter, who for two months had been with them, an engaging object of affection and promise. At day-break on the morning of the preceding day, there being indications that the end of the child was near, the family was assembled, when it was surrendered to God in the ordinance of Baptism. Before its death, on the next day, the Rev. Jotham Sewall providentially arrived to pray with it and its afflicted parents. He remained, and preached at the funeral on the day following.

The father of the child, after the funeral, in his journal, thus writes as to his emotions during the service:

"I know not that I realized my loss, but I had not a word to say. I felt that the Lord had done right. To the child I never could lay claim. Never did I suppose, I could attend upon the funeral solemnities of a child of mine, without being sensible of

more painfulness and gloom. Mrs. P. felt the loss more sensibly."

> "——In a mother's love
> There is more tenderness; the thousand chords
> Woven with every fibre of her heart,
> Complain, like delicate harp-strings, at a breath;
> But love in man is one deep principle,
> Which like a root grown in a rifted rock,
> Abides the tempest.——"

At this period, there was but one other Congregational minister in the county, and owing to his relations to the whole vicinity, and the known hospitality of his house, he was subject to an amount of company, probably, without a parallel in any other minister's family in the State. Guests were continually arriving for breakfast, for dinner, and to spend the night. Without having had any reason to expect it, he was subject, any day, to be called to go five, ten, or twenty miles to attend a funeral, or on some other emergency. He could therefore never, beforehand, be certain of having the command of his time; and often when the hardest pressed in his preparations for the Sabbath, he was compelled to leave his study. Still, the year 1815, and the three following years, were a period of able and successful labor among his people; a period of indefatigable industry in sowing the good seed of the kingdom, and in watering it. The Unitarian controversy was

then at its height in New England; and many of his more important supporters had, from the beginning, been inclined to liberal views. With signal force and earnestness, he inculcated the great truths of depravity, of election by grace, and the everlasting destruction of the incorrigibly wicked. Many of his sermons produced no small degree of excitement; but still he was heard. In 1816, his congregations were considerably larger than ever before. At his meeting, on Sabbath evening, he often read from Edwards, or some other writer, accounts of the operations of the Holy Spirit in periods of revival. These meetings were usually remarkably well attended by the young people. For them he cherished a deep solicitude, pursuing their welfare in every practicable method.

In 1816, as often as once in two weeks, he attended to the catechetical instruction of children, either in meetings appointed for the purpose, or in the public schools. In the following year, a large number of the young people, of both sexes, met him once in two weeks, when a portion of their number read to him what they had written on topics in the order suggested in Wilbur's Evangelical Catechism. Two Juvenile Missionary Associations were formed, embracing more than fifty of the young people, which continued several years in efficient existence, and

the Sabbath School was introduced. The church, at this period, was usually in a good state; days of prayer and fasting were frequently observed; and neither the year 1819, or that following, passed without the occurrence, in some part of the parish, of individual instances of awakening and hopeful conversion.

The year 1818 was one of great anxiety and labor, in consequence of the prevalence in the village of a malignant fever, which swept away many of the inhabitants. The year 1819 was entered upon with depressed spirits and gloomy forebodings. It became necessary for the church to enter upon the work of discipline, which resulted in the final removal of some of its members.

January 14*th*, 1819. A church conference. Few present. Conversed on the low and melancholy state of things in the church, and the importance of doing something for its recovery.

January 19*th*. Distressed on account of the state of things in town.

February 11*th*. The church met for fasting and prayer. A good number assembled. Some, not members of the church, seriously impressed. Meeting uncommonly interesting. Appearances indicate that God is with us, and is about to revive his work.

The hopes above expressed were not disappointed. The interest became more deep and pervading, and the year was distinguished by the pre-

sence of the Holy Spirit with the people. Nearly every district in the town shared, to a greater or less extent, in the blessing; though the cases of conversion were not very numerous. Of the fourteen received into the Congregational Church, the greater part were married people in middle life. Twenty-six children received baptism.

The following letters to Mrs. Peet, absent in Massachusetts, inserted in this place, may be read with interest:

NORRIDGEWOCK, *July 27th*, 1817.

MY DEAR WIFE:

Addressing you by this most endearing name for the first time in this way, while it awakens a thousand tender emotions, also reminds me of that Divine goodness which has not, until now, caused us to separate a sufficient length of time to render it important to communicate. I will, therefore, endeavor not to complain in view of this, my present separation, from one on whose society my earthly happiness so much depends. And I will hope and trust that this journey and visit among your numerous and dear friends will be productive of much real enjoyment, as well as materially conducive to the restoration and confirmation of your health. Should these objects be gained, I shall be abundantly compensated for my loss. And while I look forward with no indifferent feelings to that period when I hope, through the smiles of a kind Providence, you will be safely returned, I will in some measure beguile the passing moments by participating, though absent, in the happiness you enjoy in the circle of your western friends.

J. is with us, and will continue till H. returns; and, if I am not mistaken, she has some serious impressions. I hope it may prove to be the case, not only with her, but with many others in

this place. Mr. P. thinks there is a good work begun in his neighborhood. I may be able to give you more definite, and I would hope, also, more interesting intelligence on the subject in my next.

Edward had a fine frolic in the night by moonlight; kept the girls awake with his sport an hour or two, and then went quietly to sleep. He is a very good boy, and does honor to himself. He has become quite a traveller; walks all about the house without assistance. He could hardly find words to express his joy when I returned from H., but seemed disappointed at not seeing you. He calls mamma very earnestly when he sees a chaise, and sometimes seems rather displeased that it does not stop. You will easily pardon my particularity on this subject.

I have not said all I intended; but what remains principally respects myself, and is of so little consequence that I can omit it without regret. I, therefore, close, enjoining on you to be sure to write by the first mail after you receive this, and once a week at least till you return; and remember

I am your affectionate husband.

NORRIDGEWOCK, *Aug.* 10*th*, 1817.

MY DEAR WIFE:

I thank you for your very welcome letter, which last night's mail brought me. Grateful indeed to me was the information that you had a pleasant journey and safe arrival. I still feel no small solicitude about your health, from what you mentioned; but I can but hope that when you shall have become rested from the fatigues of a long journey, you will find your health amended. The blessing of health we shall never know how to value sufficiently till it is taken from us. And though I believe it to be duty carefully to employ all practicable means for recovering, or preserving health, yet I would be sensible that this, like all other blessings, comes from God alone, and will be bestowed where, and in such measure, as shall seem good in his sight. But, how-

ever desirable and essential to our usefulness we may deem bodily health, health of soul is more valuable; the light of God's countenance is a more precious gift. This is a sure proof of God's love and favor. The other is not. Bodily health is bestowed, in common, upon the sinner and saint. But health of soul is reserved for the saint alone. With this joy no stranger intermeddleth. This is the precious gift of God to his dear children. And, though I most earnestly desire for you the enjoyment of the other, I hope you are not a stranger to the joys of this. I hope you will feel, as I think you may, that you are now in the way of duty, and will, therefore, commit all to God's keeping and disposal, and endeavor to feel tranquil in your mind. I beg, you will not be so anxious about your family, as to prevent the enjoyment of your visit, or frustrate the object of it, by hastening your return sooner than would otherwise be desirable. I know not that you could have left your family in a condition to occasion less anxiety. H. manages exceedingly well. She pleases me much. She appears to know so well what she is about, that I feel quite at ease as respects family concerns.

Through Divine goodness we are all in health; and domestic enjoyment has not yet fled from the dwelling, in which I have so largely shared it with you. True, one thing is wanting, and though I shall not here attempt to tell how great that is to me—how essential to my earthly happiness—yet I should do wrong to say I am now unhappy. I look forward with joyful anticipation to the hour that shall restore to me the object, which, until now, I never knew how much I loved.

The first eyes I met this morning were those of Edward; and they were very bright. S. brought him into my study in fine spirits. He is extravagantly fond of green peas, which we have in abundance. We have also plenty of new potatoes, beets, and cucumbers. I hope our good things will not all be gone before you return.

H., S., and D. send their love. Mr. A. sends his best wishes; says, I may tell you he is here, and fares well, though he does not

do much; and Edward, on mature reflection, concluded to send his love. Mr. A. is digging up Greek roots. I assist him two or three hours in a day.

I sincerely regret the misfortune of B. How necessary to happiness, or hope, to be interested in a good which flames cannot consume, floods wash away, nor death destroy.

And now, my dear wife, may the favor of Heaven be with you while absent, give you a safe return, attend you through life, and for ever.

So prays your affectionate husband.

The latter part of the year 1820 was rendered solemn in his family by the death of Mr. Austin H. Peet, a nephew, from the State of Vermont, and a young man of piety and promising talents, who had for some time been with his uncle pursuing study, with a view to entering on the work of the Christian ministry.

Dec. 28, 1820. Toward the close of the evening, the conversation turned on the manner of spending time when we are together. We all agreed that it was faulty, and concluded to attempt amendment.

Dec. 29*th*. After the morning devotions of the family, we spent a season in religious conference, devising ways whereby we might instrumentally promote personal piety. One of the family related her Christian experience, and then we united in prayer. This course we concluded to adopt and observe, as often as we can find it convenient.

Jan. 1*st*, 1821. Through Divine goodness I enter upon another year. The last day and evening of the year which has just expired, I was permitted to spend in the public worship of God; in attempting to recommend his religion to my fellow creatures, and awaken in them, as well as in myself, some sense of

the sacredness of our obligation to live to, and for that God, by whose mercies we are constantly sustained and nourished. May the closing scene of life, also, be with God, and bear testimony to the reality and excellence of religion, and the peace and consolation it imparts. May I have grace to keep the resolution last night formed, to be in future more vigilant, diligent, and prayerful. The Lord preserve me from the evil of a useless life.

Monthly concert. A deeply interesting consideration, that Christians, in every part of the world, are, on this first day of the new year, praying for Zion and the world. The prayer-hearing God accept the offering, presented from a thousand altars, pour out his blessing and save mankind.

Dec. 31*st.* Here end another year's transactions. How solemn the thought! How many destinies has the year fixed for ever! How shall I answer for what it has recorded, and will exhibit against me?

How far it is the duty of the pastor publicly to condemn prevailing follies and practices, indulged in by his people, which he believes to be sinful and injurious, but which he cannot prevent, is a question on which, perhaps, some diversity of sentiment exists. Doubtless the pulpit is degraded when the preacher allows himself in personal invective; and the time when youth or men are most intoxicated with follies, may not always be the time most favorable for convincing them of their injurious tendency. There is a time to speak, and a time to refrain from speaking. Still, the field from which the minister may derive his discourses, is not to be circumscribed. If he may find sermons in trees and

brooks, so may he in men. Whoever will furnish him with a suitable subject for a discourse, he may avail himself of it. It is to be remembered, also, that his sermons must be appropriate to the existing condition and necessities of his hearers; and the people will not long respect a pastor who systematically avoids reproving them for what he knows, and they know, to be contrary to the Scriptures and adverse to their moral interests and everlasting salvation. The people of Noridgewock always knew that they had nothing to hope from the timidity of their minister, and that no complaisance on their part, could purchase his smiles on what he believed to be wrong, or his silence, when he believed it his duty to speak.

"The man that's resolute and just,
Firm to his priciples and trust,
Nor hopes nor fears can bind."

Jan. 13, 1822. Afternoon, preached from Jer. 28: 16, "This year thou shalt die." Bore testimony against balls, there being one appointed for next evening.

Jan. 14*th.* This evening a large party is engaged at a ball, and others at cards. How distressing to see multitudes betraying such thoughtlessness while under sentence of death, not knowing that it will not be executed before the expiration of the year on which they have now entered. By giving the first fruits of it to Satan, they seem to dedicate the year to his service. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

It may as well here, as elsewhere, be mentioned, that during the whole period of his residence at Norridgewock, he very uniformly officiated as chaplain for the courts, the judges in which held him in high estimation. In the early part of his ministry he generally officiated as chaplain at the annual military gatherings; but subsequently he came to regard these last occasions with aversion and pain.

"O war, thou son of hell!
Whom angry heavens do make their minister."

In the autumn of the year 1822, it was determined that the churches in Kennebec and Somerset counties should be visited by a committee appointed by the pastors. He was designated as one of the committee. While engaged in performing the duties thus assigned him, he wrote the following letter:

VASSALBORO', *Oct.* 19, 1822.

MY DEAR WIFE:

I had the unexpected pleasure of hearing from you by way of Misses D. and L., who were with you on Monday night, and learning that, through the kindness and mercy of the Lord, all was well. With regard to myself, goodness has attended me; my health has been good, my way prosperous, and in most respects, pleasant. We have visited the churches in Hallowell, Pittston, Windsor, Ligonia, and Unity. To-day we meet the church in Vassalborough. Monday is assigned for Augusta, Tuesday for Litchfield, Wednesday for Winthrop, Thursday for Chesterville, and so on to Wilton, Temple, Farmington, New Sharon, and Mercer. It is interesting to meet with the little

churches, many of which are as sheep without a shepherd, and to inquire into their state, and administer counsel and encouragement, as well as to sympathize with them in their trials. But it would be still more interesting could we find them more alive. O! how desirable to see the churches arise. I hope our church is waking up. How alarming is such a general declension! No wonder that sinners are thoughtless, when Christians are so generally asleep.

I fully reciprocate your views and feelings with regard to the increased estimate which you place on the privilege of writing. Never did I so highly prize letters from you, as I do of late. I am glad to learn that you have not been *lonesome*. I hope that when you are so, on account of my absence, you will retire and pray for one, who, in similar circumstances, endeavors to meet you at a throne of grace. Nor would I request you to meet me there only when you are *lonesome*, but also when it is well with you. My comfort, when anxious about my dear family, is in endeavoring to commit them into the hands of God, and imploring his protection and mercy.

Give the children a kiss from their father, and tell them to be good.

And now, very dear wife, I subscribe myself, as ever,

Your affectionate husband.

When the Gospel is faithfully preached, life and death are set before men, and they do inevitably make a choice. They may stand halting for a time, but soon they go one way or the other with all their hearts. The mind that will not yield itself to the power of the truth, will, ere long, exert itself to evade the truth. They who will not obey the Gospel will become unwilling to hear it. The crisis is usually hastened if preaching is doctrinal

and earnest, and is accompanied with the strivings of the Holy Spirit. In these circumstances many become Christ's disciples, and many take a course, dictated by a desire to have as little thought as possible of the terrors of the Almighty's vengeance to the Christless.

"From our ill ordered hearts we oft are fain to roam,
As men go forth who find unquietness at home."

There had been a number from the beginning at Norridgewock, who exhibited opposition to the truths of the Gospel preached to them. For a period of twelve years the naked truth had been held up to their view. Numbers of them, at times, were in a degree awakened, sought the counsel and prayers of their pastor, and seemed almost decided to follow Christ; but yet were only almost persuaded.

Such was the power of the truth, and such the wisdom of the pastor, and the hold he had on his parishioners, from the purity of his life and the benevolence of his spirit, that for years the congregation kept together.

"Thy presence did each doubtful heart compose,
And factions wondered that they once arose."

But, as was to have been anticipated, in 1825 several who had hitherto been associated with the

church in supporting the Gospel, withdrew their aid, and united with others in originating a Unitatarian congregation in the village. The people were now formally divided. Two congregations, side by side, assembled on the Sabbath. Some of the wealthiest had seceded, and the hearts of many left in the original society began to fail. Before weak, and now reduced, and considerable acrimony of feeling existing, their prospects were indeed apparently not flattering.

CHAPTER III.

AT NORRIDGEWOCK THREE-FOURTHS THE TIME.

"THERE is joy, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." And the repentance of a sinner gives delight to the saints on the earth. But unspeakable is the satisfaction of the faithful minister of Christ, who has long toiled, and watched, and prayed, and had patience, when he sees those who have been the objects of his toil and solicitude brought into the kingdom of God. Then words will not suffice to express his thankfulness; and with his joy a stranger doth not intermeddle. This joy had the pastor at Norridgewock during the greater part of the year 1826, notwithstanding the untoward events of the year preceding. On the first day of this year he thus wrote:

When I laid myself down the last night, the rain was drenching the earth, and without, all was boisterous and dreary. When I awoke all was mild and serene. Tempestuous and stormy was the close of the last year; tranquil and pleasant the beginning

of this, resembling the close of the sinner's impenitent career, and his entrance upon a life of piety and faith.

At the close of the year is the following:

A merciful God has not only spared my life, and the lives of all the members of my dear family, and nourished us with his temporal mercies, as usual; but he has permitted me to witness the bestowment of the richest spiritual blessing upon my people; has sent his Holy Spirit, and revived his work. It has been the favored year, which he has reserved, in which to accomplish so great a work in Norridgewock, as the hopeful conversion of sixty souls. While I live, I think, I shall remember this year with interest. It has been the most interesting year of my life.

The members of the church, in their enfeebled condition, fainted not, but betook themselves to God in earnest prayer. Increasing numbers were present at public worship, and a growing interest and solemnity were apparent during the winter. In March, the church observed a day, as a season of fasting and prayer. The State fast occurred early in the next month, and the assembled people were addressed from the words: "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved." The numbers present, the stillness and fixed attention and solemnity, constrained the pastor to say, that he had never before attended such a fast in Norridgewock; and "surely the Lord is in this place." Soon occurred interesting cases of conversion. Seriousness became gen-

eral in the town; and for a considerable period conversions were of almost daily occurrence. At several times during the summer there was an apparent cessation of progress in the work, which had the effect to lead to an increase of prayer. The pastor is known, more than once, to have spent the entire night, engaged in this exercise; and prayer was availing. The Hearer of prayer approved and rewarded the feeling in his people, that his work must go on. On the first Sabbath in September, twenty-nine persons were admitted to the church; others in the subsequent months of the year, and others still, the year following, making the whole number about forty. Other denominations shared in the fruits of this revival. Three brothers united with the Methodist order, all of whom received a public education, and entered the ministry. Two of them, now living, are highly esteemed ministers in that denomination, occupying important locations.

Till 1826, Mr. Peet had preached to his own people one half of the time. Early this year, instead of yielding to despondence, his people increased their subscriptions for his support, and thenceforth, for a period of eleven years, he devoted to them three-fourths of his time. It is interesting to notice the wonders of God's provi-

dences. How vain are attempts to crush the kingdom of Christ! How unnecessary and sinful is distrust of God on the part of his people!

"When we review our dismal fears,
'Twas hard to think they'd vanish so;
With God we left our flowing tears;
He makes our joys like rivers flow."

No periods, perhaps, more bring into requisition, and put to the test, the wisdom and fidelity of the pastor, than those which immediately succeed a time of ingathering. Then there is apt to be lassitude; but dangers are never more imminent. The following is from a communication to the Rev. Dr. Storrs, Secretary of the Massachusetts Missionary Society:

July 17, 1828.

I will first say a word of myself. Being desirous to do something to prevent the lamentable declension, which too generally succeeds a revival, I introduced some measures, at the beginning of the year, for this purpose. Among others, I extended my Bible class into three different parts of the town, after having preached a lecture in each to the young people, hoping to excite some more interest among them. Each of these meetings I attended, once a fortnight, which, together with other stated meetings, made me three, four, and sometimes five, a week. This course I pursued till May, though to my injury, yet with increasing interest to my feelings, and with increasing prospects of good. But the labor undertaken, and exposure to the night air proved to be too much for my lungs, which I found had not yet fully recovered from the injury received in a similar way, during

the revival. I was obliged to suspend my Bible meetings, though with great reluctance, as the interest was increasing. I am well satisfied that the Bible Class system is a means of doing good, of which the minister should eagerly avail himself, so far as practicable.

January 7, 1829. At evening, attended a conference. About sixty young people assembled in an adjacent building for a ball. The Lord open their eyes; show them what an expression of thanks is this, for God's preserving mercy, and awaken their attention to the things which belong to their peace.

Fast, April 9th. I must make some effort to prevent the children from treating, as a holiday, a season of fasting and prayer. The Lord direct and aid me.

Nov. 15th. Had an affecting sense of my frailty, and of my need of assistance, both temporal and spiritual, for myself and my dear family. Felt anxious for the dear church, and the cause of God in Norridgewock.

Few public men pass through life, escaping entirely the envenomed attacks of the tongue of slander, and the temporary alienation of some who had seemed to be friends. In this respect Mr. Peet was more favored than most; but in the year 1830, a rumor was put in circulation prejudicial to him, as wanting in justice to character, in a certain case. This was so far heeded, in the vicinity, and by some of his ministerial brethren, with others, that for a time it occasioned no small stir, not with his people, but in the neighborhood. He experienced some invidious neglects, and, once or twice, at least, in an indirect way, was indecorously impeached in a pub-

lic assembly. It seemed as if a settled purpose had been formed to prostrate, if possible, his reputation and influence. In these circumstances, in no small degree trying, he exhibited remarkably the meekness and gentleness of the Gospel, and as remarkably demeaned himself with the self-respect becoming a gentleman and a Christian, arraigned without a fault. To any entitled to explanation, he freely imparted it when sought. Beyond this he wisely abstained from efforts at self-defence, committing himself to Him who judgeth righteously. He did not fail to find that "the righteousness of the upright shall deliver them." Time extorted the conviction, and the acknowledgment, of his entire integrity in the matter. Most, who had been misled, made to him all the satisfaction he desired. With all his heart he forgave them; as before, he had been disposed to put the most lenient construction upon their motives in the course by which he knew that he was wronged. Temporary disquietude and sorrow were the extent of the injury he received. His character was made to appear the more resplendent, not only as a man of integrity, but of rare discretion.

Oct. 27, 1831. At Farmington, attending a series of meetings. Awoke in the night. The issue of the meeting, also my own children, two of whom were with me, my family and people,

rested with such weight on my mind, that I could not sleep. Felt that the blessing needed was in the hand of a Sovereign. Never did I feel more dependent. This was no virtue in me; I was driven to it. At the close of the afternoon the awakened were invited to stop. A number tarried, and among them my daughter.

A few months prior to the preceding date, his eldest son, in the Academy at Farmington, had become hopefully the subject of a saving change. Subjoined are parts of letters addressed to this son.

My Dear Son:

It is interesting to me that I may write to one, who, I hope, has an interest in the Saviour, especially after the scenes of this day. We have witnessed this day a scene which is suited to make the world look small, and life a vapor; and to show the immense importance of having religion, and of having it early. Mr. A., that amiable young man, that youth of so much promise, is now deposited beneath the clods of the valley. And so sudden was his dissolution, that he dressed himself for the grave. He arose and ate his breakfast as comfortably as he had done for a number of days before. Then he changed his collar and cravat, and adjusted them, and, in a few moments, he was no more. How suddenly was life extinguished! O, how important to be ready!

O, my dear son, have you indeed given your heart to God? Have you become reconciled to him through the blood of his dear Son? Are you making the eternal God your portion? If so, it is wise; it is well. But these are questions of infinite moment. It infinitely concerns you to decide them right. A good hope, or true religion, is an infinite good. But a false hope, or false religion, persisted in, is an infinite evil. It is endless ruin; there is no reprieve. Beware of nothing so much as self-deception in matters of religion. Examine yourself faithfully, prayerfully, and daily. If you have made God your portion,

you will find and manifest, that you love him. You will delight in him, and in his Word and service. You will hate and strive against sin, in thought, word and deed. You will forsake the vanities, follies, and levities of youth. You will prize the Saviour, because he is a Saviour from sin. You will be much in prayer. He that truly loves God, will love to commune with him. If you love God, you will desire, and aim to live for him. You will not live merely to please and gratify yourself, but will deny yourself, and mortify the proud, selfish feelings of a corrupt heart, and strive to have such feelings as God requires. O, if you would prove yourself a child of God, you must show that old things have passed away, and that all things have become new.

From your affectionate father.

My Dear Son:

Your letter I received not till this afternoon. I perceive it was dated the day after you received ours. I am glad to find you so prompt in answering them. Hope you will prove thus ready for the performance of every duty, in its proper time and place. Punctuality is of great importance. There is a propensity in our natures to neglect duty, or postpone the performance of it, which ought to be sternly resisted, for it is displeasing to God and injurious to us. It also betrays a slothful spirit—an unwillingness to perform our duty—whereas it ought to be a pleasure. More injury than we are aware results from inattention to little things; from neglecting or delaying beyond their proper time little duties, if there are any duties that may be called little. By indulging in ease, or in loose, vain conversation, or thinking, or unprofitable reading, one may be led to put off, or neglect self-examination, secret prayer, or watchfulness, or some more trifling duties and attentions to the soul, whereby the conscience will be hardened and rendered more stupid, and the way prepared for greater neglects. A careful, conscientious,

punctual attention to little duties, as well as others, is a good way to keep the conscience alive and tender, and to promote the health of the soul, and spiritual improvement. You have much need, my son, to watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation; that you neglect no duty, that you do not deceive yourself.

I am glad that you have some sense of your obligations to God for his distinguishing goodness to you, and are led to inquire: What shall I render unto him for all his benefits? You may adopt the sentiment of Watts:

"Here, Lord, I give myself away,
'Tis all that I can do."

Sabbath, Oct. 30, 1831. Felt need of aid, and hoped I should not be quite deserted. And I was not disappointed. The Lord was good. He did assist me. I hope and pray that good may follow.

Nov. 28th. Awoke in the night with anxious thoughts for my family and people.

Dec. 6th. Again engrossed in the night with anxious thoughts. My own frailty, and temporal embarrassments, the welfare of my dear family, the conversion of my children, and of others in the place who are serious, and of multitudes who are careless, deprived me of sleep.

Toward the close of this year several cases of conversion occurred, and there were marked indications of a revival. Early in 1832, the church decided that it was expedient to hold a series of meetings.

Jan. 3, 1832. Sabbath. Awoke with a weight of anxiety. Sought the Lord for his merciful aid. O, that I were better qualified for the work of the ministry. The Lord help me. Went to meeting. Tried to stir up my dear church to examine

themselves, and put away iniquity from their hearts, and cry unto God with importunity and with singleness for his effectual blessing.

Some good effects appeared to result from the meetings, held for six days. During the following month, another day of prayer and fasting was observed; and of the fruits of the work that year twenty were added to the church. In the year 1835, fourteen were added, one of which number was Mr. Peet's eldest daughter, the second of his children, whom he was permitted to welcome to the table of Christ.

During the years, from 1826 to 1837, he pursued his work substantially in the same manner, and employing the same means, that he had done in the earlier part of his ministry. And though his health was often feeble, and his labors, at several times, for weeks, and even months, entirely interrupted, they were years of distinguished usefulness. There were individuals in the congregation generally under serious impressions.

The letter, addressed to him by one who is now a useful pastor in the Baptist denomination, which follows, expresses the regard for him cherished by the writer of it, and by some dozen other men with him, whom he encouraged and aided in entering upon literary pursuits, and in whose entrance upon

the work of the ministry he was, in a greater or less degree, instrumental. One of these was the Rev. Harrison Allen, Missionary of the American Board to the Choctaw Indians, who died at Elliot, in the year 1831; and another, the Rev. Samuel Munson, who, in 1834, with his companion, the Rev. Henry Lyman, died a martyr to the cause of Missions, murdered by the Battas on the Island of Sumatra.

WATERVILLE COLLEGE, *Oct. 8th*, 1832.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

Often have I resolved to take the liberty of addressing you. My only apology is, the affection which I have for you, as a spiritual father in Christ. Often do I, in imagination, revisit the spot where we stood when God was pleased, by his Spirit, to set home to my heart your pressing admonitions to me, to seek an interest in Christ, and to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. I returned home with the discovery that I was a wretched, undone sinner. I retired alone to plead for mercy. Hours and days passed away, but still the sound, Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, was ringing in my ears. Your preaching subsequently was often like arrows to my heart; especially the sermon concerning the young man in the Gospel, who came to Christ. At length it pleased God to display the riches of his grace, and, when I was on the borders of despair, to speak my sins forgiven. Think it not strange, dear sir, that I have that affection for you, that I have for no other. The bond which binds me to you, is that which binds a son begotten in the Gospel. The benefits I have received through you, concern my soul's salvation, and they take hold on eternity. You, I trust, was the instrument, in the hands of God, in plucking me, as a brand from the burning. It is that I may advance the cause of Christ more extensively, that I am now devoting my time to

study. I have many trials in respect to the great work of the ministry, not only because it is arduous, but because of my unworthiness and feebleness. It is, however, a consolation, that God exhibits his condescension and the power of his grace, by employing such feeble instruments as men, to glorify his own great name. I hope, sir, God will abundantly succeed your labors, and that you may be the means of rescuing many a youth from eternal death.

O, what joys are in reserve for you, when you shall have finished your work. I should esteem it a great favor if you could find time to write to me.

CHAPTER IV.

HIS MISSIONARY LABORS.

In the preceding chapters, little notice has been taken of Mr. Peet's labors, except among his own people at Norridgewock. Here they were arduous, and abundant, and successful, perhaps, beyond what falls to the lot of most pastors wholly devoted to a single congregation. Half his Sabbaths, however, for twelve years, and a fourth of them for the eleven following years, he spent away from his own charge. And it may not be easy to determine, whether, during these years, the amount of good he accomplished was greater at Norridgewock, or elsewhere in the vicinity. No other method is suggested, which will so satisfactorily place before the mind of the reader a view of the extent, nature, and results of his labors abroad, as the giving of specimens from his missionary journals, taken almost at random.

In the year 1816, he performed ten weeks' labor in the service of the Hampshire Missionary Society.

Feb. 2, 1816. Being on a journey, by advice I spent the Sabbath in Lovel, a destitute town in Oxford county. Preached twice to a small but very attentive assembly. Visited several families, including one sick individual. After reaching home, rode to Madison, and preached at a funeral.

Second week. The county Association for the Reformation of Morals occupied some of my attention. Attended its meeting, and wrote in its behalf. Preached twice in Starks, where a third meeting was prevented by a great fall of snow. Visited six families, one sick woman, another widowed lady, recently bereft of her husband, and now beholding a daughter in the agonies of death. The neighbors being present, conversed and prayed with them before and after the daughter died. Attended her funeral.

Third week. Preached once in Mercer; twice in Belgrade; and, on the Sabbath, twice in Dearborn, to a large and attentive assembly.

Fourth week. Preached twice in Fairfield; a contemplated meeting failing, on account of bad travelling. Visited four families, and distributed some Bibles, received from the Bible Society of Hallowell and Augusta. Preached at a funeral in a remote part of the town; the family not belonging to my society. Visited an afflicted family, whose child had just died. Preached again at a funeral.

Fifth week. Preached three times in Madison to a full and attentive assembly; and once, at a funeral. Visited ten families. Inspected their religious library, and left books for its increase.

Sixth week. Preached in Anson three times. Visited a sick woman, and a neighborhood containing about a dozen families, in an extreme part of the town. Gave to each family an Evangelical Primer, on the condition that their children should meet me in the neighborhood every fortnight, for the purpose of catechetical instruction.

Seventh week. Sorted and prepared some tracts for a society in Solon, which I had procured with money they had raised. At Solon attended a church meeting. Admitted a member, after

hearing her religious experience. Another stated the grounds of his hope, and was propounded. Preached twice on the Sabbath, and administered the sacrament. Audience attentive and solemn. Visited nine families, and attended one prayer-meeting.

Eighth week. Labored in Starks. Preached two lectures; and twice on the Sabbath, to the largest assembly I had ever found in the place. Visited about ten families, and distributed Bibles and other books.

Ninth week. At Industry. Failed at one lecture, from a melancholy death at home. Preached four times; distributed some Bibles; visited ten families. In one house was a dying woman, who expired soon after I left her. Attended a prayer-meeting.

Tenth week. In Solon. Attended a church conference; preached three times; admitted one man to the church; and baptized six children. People very attentive and solemn, and the largest assembly I had ever seen in the place. Visited eleven families, and did some writing for the church.

Journal of the year 1819, in the service of the same society.

April 1st. I spent the first week in New Sharon. This place I had visited, once a month, for some time past. I now found a revival commencing, of which there were hopeful appearances, at my last visit. Several had obtained hope. Attended one church meeting, and four other conferences. Conversed with the serious. Visited twelve families, preached four times; administered the ordinance of the Supper, and baptized one child. Assemblies interesting and solemn. There were present several recent converts from Chesterville, where a good work is in progress.

Second week. Spent in Madison, where I visited thirteen families; some members of which had recently obtained hope, while others were serious. Preached three times, one lecture failing from want of notice.

Third week. At New Sharon. Found the good work still in progress; several having obtained hope since my last visit. Hopeful converts about forty. Had conversation with a number of the serious, preached three times, attended two conferences, made eight family visits, admitted one person to the church, and administered the sacrament, and the ordinance of baptism.

Fourth week. Spent in Solon. A few weeks ago, the little flock here were troubled by a root of bitterness, and had no one to restore peace; but, by the blessing of God attending the labors of a Missionary, who providentially visited them at this juncture, the breach in the church was healed. And now several, who had recently obtained hope, manifested a wish to be added to their number. Six persons, during this visit, were examined and approved by the church. Preached three times; attended one conference; admitted six persons to the church, one of whom was baptized; administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and made twelve family visits.

Fifth week. In Freeman, New Portland, and Kingfield. Preached once at New Portland; at Freeman three times; and admitted one person to the church. At Kingfield preached once, and formed a religious library. Left books for the Sabbath school library, and sent more afterwards. Preached once at Strong. Visited in my tour about fifteen families.

Sixth week. Preached once, and visited several families in Industry. At New Sharon, visited sixteen families, preached four times, admitted five persons to the church; administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, administered baptism to four persons. A solemn and interesting day to me, and to many others.

Seventh week. Made eight family visits, preached four times to attentive assemblies.

Eighth week. After attending the meeting of the Maine Missionary Society, at Augusta, returned to Fairfield, visited several families, and preached three times.

Ninth week. At Solon. Preached three times, attended one

conference, admitted two persons to the church, baptized one, and visited about fifteen families.

Tenth week. Was spent in Madison. I preached four times, and visited one sick family, and four others.

In the service of the same society, in the year 1822.

First week. At New Sharon. Here the Congregational church and society offer to make me half the compensation, if I will supply them, a fourth part of the time, for the year to come. Several members of the church recently much revived. Preached four times, and attended a prayer-meeting.

Second week. Spent at Athens village, and in Madison. In the former place, a few individuals have raised one hundred dollars to procure a supply for one half the time. Preached on the Sabbath at Athens, and visited five families. Preached twice in Madison, and visited seven families.

Third week. At New Sharon. Preached four times, attended a conference, administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and visited several families.

Fourth week. In New Sharon. Preached three times; rode a distance to visit a house, where was a young man near to death. I found he had recently obtained hope in Christ. Visited eight other families.

Fifth week. At New Sharon. Made a number of family visits, and preached three times. Preached once in Mercer, where things wear a favorable aspect. A number of Congregational members have moved into the place, who, together with the few that may be gathered up in town, will, it is thought, constitute a number sufficient to authorize the formation of a church. They are preparing a convenient place for worship; and begin to think of raising something for the support of the Gospel.

Sixth week. At New Sharon. Visited one sick woman, and eleven other families. Preached four times, and attended and opened a flourishing Sabbath-school. The assemblies unusually large.

Seventh week. Spent in Strong. Attended the anniversary of a Female Missionary Society, which I assisted in forming last year. Visited fourteen families. Preached on the Sabbath to crowded congregations. During the intermission, I urged upon them the Sabbath school. Administered the sacrament of the Supper, and preached three lectures.

Eighth week. Spent in Solon and Madison. Preached twice on the Sabbath, and visited the Sabbath school. Visited a number of families, and labored to promote the settlement of a difficulty in the church. Preached twice in Madison.

Ninth week. At New Sharon. Attended one meeting for prayer, preached five times; administered the sacrament of the Supper, and baptized one child. Preached one lecture in Starks, visited a sick person, and attended a funeral.

Tenth week. At New Sharon. Attended a conference and Sabbath school; preached four times; administered the sacrament, and visited twelve families.

There is, in this vicinity, a disposition to make increasing exertions to procure the Gospel, and also to give a more general attendance upon it, when enjoyed. In several places, where little or nothing has been done hitherto, subscriptions have been raised to procure the labors of a missionary one fourth of the time, on condition of paying one half of the compensation. In one instance, females subscribed; in another, different denominations united. And, I think, it is apparent also, that different denominations are more disposed, not only to attend each other's meetings, but to accommodate and unite, than heretofore. On the whole, the cry, "Come over and help us," is heard from almost every quarter, and more distinctly.

Some time before Mr. Peet surrendered entirely his missionary labors, the Massachusetts Society, offering increased assistance as an inducement, urged

the measure of his confining his labors to his own people. The secretary writes:

"We have no confidence in the utility of dividing ministers, or cutting them in pieces, that one town may have one piece, and another town another piece. A whole minister is a blessing; a divided minister is of more doubtful utility." It may be, that the time had come, when his people, instead of seeking for themselves his services for an additional quarter of the time only, should have secured his undivided labors. A whole minister had been better for them; but it is still questionable, whether the general interests of religion were not greatly promoted by the fact, that, for the best part of his life, his labors were extended. All general rules must yield to circumstances and exigencies.

He, who sent his Son into the world, having prepared the way for his coming, and raised up Martin Luther to be the instrument in the Protestant Reformation, after the world was brought into a state fitted to feel his influence, has prepared the way for the stupendous system of missionary labor which now engages the heart of Christendom, and constitutes the chief instrumentality for the world's salvation. It was needful that the father of Samuel J. Mills, and other pastors in Connecticut, should leave their full-fed parishes, and, for two or three

months in the year, visit the new and destitute regions of Vermont, and return and tell what they had seen and done. The son might never have thought of being a missionary, had he not been able to say, "I learned it of my father." And it was needful that the pastors in old time, on the lower Kennebec, should visit the wastes up the river, and that in these wastes there should be itinerants, Sewall, Sawyer, Emerson, and others; and then, that there should be an influence, more constant, steady, and abiding, than can be exerted by mere itinerants. Every enterprise has its beginning, and its consecutive steps of progress. There must be tens before there can be hundreds, and hundreds before there can be thousands. American missions could not have extended across a continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific shores, without preparation.

When, in 1814, Mr. Peet took charge of the church in Norridgewock, there was, with the exception of the Rev. Fifield Holt, recently settled at Bloomfield, no other congregational pastor in the county of Somerset, but one in that part of Kennebec, now constituting the county of Franklin, and but four others, at Winthrop, Pittston, Hallowell, and Augusta, any where in the county of Kennebec. With these exceptions, no towns in these counties had ever received pastors. In Somerset, and the

parts of Kennebec adjacent, there were but few churches; and these few were small in number, weak in means, and many of them worried and distracted by petty divisions existing among the members. His labors as an itinerant, extended to some twenty-five towns; his services every where being rendered doubly efficient and valuable from the facts, that he was known to be highly esteemed by an intelligent people at home; that he dwelt in the vicinity of his labors, and was therefore, in the highest sense, responsible for all his measures and acts; and that he was compelled to be a close applicant to study.

The places most indebted to him for missionary labors are, Solon, Bingham, Madison, New Sharon, and Mercer. In each of these towns he sustained, at different periods, the relation of a *stated supply*. In these locations, besides, as elsewhere, organizing a church, or reanimating one which had but a name to live, he aided them in removing difficulties, promoted habits of religious reading, interested himself in schools, and put in operation most of the agencies for the welfare of the people which he did at home. He observed system in his work, keeping in view permanent, and not merely temporary results. He was with them in the most interesting scenes and transactions of life; when they were sick, and when there was death, and the burial of the dead; when

the young people were married; when the young and the more advanced in life were awakened and converted; and when they joined the church; and as often as they did sit at the table of Christ. In short, he was to the people of these towns very much what the affectionate, faithful, and successful pastor is to his own flock.

> "With a kindly heart, through the lapsing years,
> He hath shared your joys, he hath wiped your tears,
> He hath bound the wreath on the brow of the bride,
> He hath stood by the couch, when loved ones died;
> Pointing the soul to a glorious heaven,
> As the ties which bound it to earth were riven."

He was the first Congregational minister whom the writer distinctly remembers to have heard preach. He well recollects his first visit at Solon. The inhabitants of that town, like those in Norridgewock, were, many of them, recently from Pepperell, Groton, and other towns in Middlesex county, Massachusetts, and the bordering towns in New Hampshire. They had not, for the most part, been educated under a discriminating theology; but some were Congregational in their predilections. It was known that there was a missionary at Norridgewock; and one man in Solon engaged to pay for two weeks' service, if the Missionary Society would also pay for an equal time. The arrangement was effected. The missionary arrived on Friday, preached on that

day, and visited on the day following. The Sabbath came. In a school-house of pretty good size, at one corner of a huge fireplace built of stone, stood the preacher, tall and erect, his notes in his hand, and preached to the assembled people. It was a large gathering of men, youth, and women, not excepting mothers with their infants. Four Sabbaths' preaching from the same man was considerable for them in prospect. It concerned them to know what sort of a man the preacher was. As other sensible people do, in such cases, they put him on probation. Very closely they watched him in his preaching, and in their houses; but, before the four Sabbaths had passed, they yielded him such a measure of their confidence, that they were very desirous that the people of Norridgewock should retain him, that so they might hear him more. Indeed, during these first Sabbaths, as he dispensed the Word, unfolding Christ and him crucified, the power of God, and the wisdom of God, "his speech not in enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God;" it was observable that some eyes were intently fixed; and some countenances bore the marks of deep thought, and of commencing conviction. It is a wonderful power which the truth of God has on

men's consciences and hearts, spoken by his servants, who appear to be, and are, what they profess to be; and when the Spirit gives it power. There were individuals who felt that the message was one demanding their deliberate and solemn attention, and who were constrained, like the noble Bereans, to go home and "search the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Among those thus affected was an intelligent and well-bred woman, recently from Quincy, Massachusetts, where she had imbibed other than evangelical views. Inch by inch she contested the ground, till she was obliged utterly to abandon the scheme, which represents that the sinner receives eternal life by works. Immediately it became her inquiry, "What shall I do?" Directed in the way of the Gospel, and replying boldly to the minister, "Sir, you require what is impossible;" she was, of course, told by him, "I require nothing. It is a question that you have to settle with your Maker and Judge." Controversy was soon terminated by submission. In this case the change was proved to have been genuine, by a long and eminently spiritual life, which has been but recently terminated. Mr. Peet continued to visit the people of Solon. Gradually they gave him their confidence, convinced that he was the man he professed to be, till their trust became such as could not be shaken. He could

lead them almost at pleasure. He saw not a few of them brought into the kingdom of Christ. Under his guidance the small branch church became independently organized, and was increased; and, in the year 1824, received its own pastor. In New Sharon, and in Mercer, he was, perhaps, even more useful than in Solon.

Ministers must be such that they may safely be put on trial, and will have the greatest power when they are most known. The plan of having them preach through life, merely as strangers to strangers, is not wise. If a feeble congregation cannot have its own minister, it should have one who comes as near to being its own minister as is possible. Then we may hope for permanent fruits, and fruits which, if they come slowly, when they come, are worth the having. The nearest approach to Christ present is the ministry he has ordained. "He that receiveth you, receiveth me."

In his missionary labors, he was brought much into proximity with ministers and Christians of other evangelical denominations. With them it was his habit to practise no concealments. Without disguise he pursued his work on his own principles, taking care of the interests of his own denomination, which he believed to be most conformed to the Gospel. But with Christians of other names he de-

sired and maintained a friendly intercourse. He rejoiced in their successes. To them he was just and generous, in his feelings and in his conduct. Ever seeking the salvation of souls, and prepared to rejoice in their conversion through whatever instrumentality, he was ready to unite in services with others whenever it seemed to be wise, and he was never tempted to leave the work of his appropriate field to take part in labors growing out of a system of mutual piracy and plunder, which are sometimes the sin and the disgrace of the different families of Christ's followers.

"Lovingly to each other sun and moon give place,
Else were the mighty heaven for them too narrow space."

At the early periods of his ministry the body often had hard fare. He was the owner of a noble and spirited horse, a most faithful and efficient companion of his travels, and a decided favorite with his owner. On the back of the horse or on foot, in many cases, he was obliged to pursue his journeys. In cases not a few, he was, without the fault of the animal, thrown off; or with him he was in peril in fording streams, passing through sloughs or over bridges, constructed of round poles, not well fixed, nor near to each other. He might stop at a house three miles distant from a place of meeting; and he

would walk the distance himself, that his horse might be mounted by a female, who must else lose the privilege of hearing a sermon. His boots were often full of water. When the system was in a state least fitted to endure it, the rain or the snow often found its way to the pillow on which he had laid his head, through crevices in the wall against him, or of the roof above him. In the severest weather known in Maine, having preached on Saturday, on the Sabbath, and on Monday, he many a time reached his home at twelve o'clock of the night. But of these things he was not accustomed to speak, except in pleasantry, and to intimate friends; and of them he thought as little as he said.

He had reward for toils and hardships endured, in the fruits of his labors, sometimes immediately manifested; and sometimes, revealed after the lapse of years.

In one instance he had engaged to preach in a district in Mercer. When the day appointed arrived, a severe storm was prevailing, and the ways were so blocked with drifted snows, that his progress was rendered all but impossible. In accordance with his general habit in such cases, he however pressed on, and reached the school-house that had been designated. There he found a man and his wife, who, with himself, had encountered

the raging elements, and were his only auditors. To them he preached the gospel; and then, with much difficulty and fatigue, and with some despondence, returned to his home. Some years afterwards, there was a revival of religion in that town, and among those who appeared before the world, as Christ's followers, was the woman above referred to, who attributed her awakening and conversion, under God, to the influence of the sermon at the school-house, to which herself and husband were the sole listeners.

In his work, as a missionary, he preached abundantly, assisted in organizing seven churches, admitted about one hundred members, administered the ordinance of Baptism to a hundred and fifty persons, and that of the Lord's Supper more than one hundred and thirty times. When, in 1837, he retired from these labors, instead of sixteen churches in the counties in which they were performed, as at the commencement, he saw thirty-nine churches; and instead of six pastors he saw twenty-three, including five, who labored as a stated supply. In Somerset, as it then had become, instead of five, were sixteen churches; and instead of two, were eleven pastors.

The immediate effects of his labors, in new and destitute settlements, were very valuable; their remote influence will be felt by successive generations; and can be fully known, only in eternity.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AT NORRIDGEWOCK.

CHAPTER V.

AT NORRIDGEWOCK THE WHOLE TIME.

Worn with so many years of exhausting service, naturally inclined to despondence, and having arrived to fifty-seven years of age, it might well have been supposed that when, in 1837, his people completed an arrangement by which he was to spend himself wholly for them, he would not be very energetic or sanguine in his anticipations of great results from future labors. But his hope was not broken, nor his zeal abated. On the contrary, for a period of at least eight years, he seemed to have new vigor in the prosecution of his work, bringing forth fruit with increase in old age.

His people, besides increasing their subscription for his support, at the same time made considerable exertions, and incurred considerable expense, in securing, for their own exclusive use, the meeting-house, and in renovating it, so that they possessed a certain, convenient, and comely place for worship.

An organ was soon furnished, and in due time a bell provided. These changes were to him exceedingly gratifying and encouraging. He now devoted more care than he ever had done before to his preparations for the pulpit, writing new discourses, and writing them throughout, and recasting and finishing the productions of former years. His sermons became now shorter and more chaste, while they lost nothing as to being impassioned. He still faithfully visited his people at their dwellings, and attended an unusual number of conferences, prayer-meetings, and lectures. The youth were instructed in the Bible class. He inculcated beneficence, and trained his flock, as well as himself, to sympathize in every form of human suffering, and to be ready for every good work in advancing the cause of Christ at home and abroad.

In his ministerial exchanges, it was now exceeding pleasant to him to visit congregations with which he had formerly labored, sharing in their joy and their sorrows. The confidence reposed in him, rendered him specially useful in the region. By his brethren in the ministry, in the neighborhood, he was not only respected, but regarded with a love and veneration approaching, in some cases at least, almost to a passion.

His soul still delighted in revivals of religion;

and judging from the accounts he gives in his diary, his spiritual experience was, at no former period, so rich and desirable. There were some difficulties in the church, which came very near to him, from the standing of the parties, and his former relations to them; difficulties, the proper way to dispose of which, it may be, was not very apparent. This was to him a source of much sorrow, both before the action of the church in the case, and afterwards. And one can but weep to find, that in consequence of deficiency in the means of support, he was subjected to so much embarrassment and distress. But such a sense of dependence upon God, such a casting of cares upon him, such pleading with him, such mortification of sin and self, and such tenderness of spirit towards God, and towards men, as he exhibits; are to be desired, by whatever means produced. It may seem that in his exercises there is a tinge of melancholy. If so, it is not chiefly on his own account, nor for his own sake. It is as the sadness of the hero, whose soul is in the cause of his country. He may exult in victories achieved for her, but his heart is softened at the evils she experiences in the conflict,—the bold hearts she loses, the treacheries of false friends, and the woes that are yet to come. What minister of Christ wishes to have a heart that shall render exemption from such sadness possible?

The faithful have enough, though their joy, here, be chiefly of the nature of support, comfort and hope.

"With inward consolation recompens'd,
And oft supported."

The apostle of the Gentiles had no more, nor even the Saviour, himself, when he was on earth; and it is enough, if his servants have as much. Christ wept over the sin and misery that were past a remedy, and they cannot wish not to be made sad by the evil in themselves, and in others, they cannot cure. Every faithful Christian, and especially, every good minister of the Gospel, while he lives, is in a warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil.

"There is a time, when toil must be preferred,
Or joy, by mistimed fondness, is undone.
* * * * * *
Much joy not only speaks small happiness,
But happiness, that shortly must expire.
Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand?
And in a tempest can reflection live?
Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour?
Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd?
Or ope the door to honest poverty?
Or talk with threatening death, and not turn pale?"

Jan. 1*st.* 1838. I think, I do increasingly desire to be useful to my people and family, and to live to better purpose; and my earnest prayer is, and has been, during, the wakeful hours of the past night, that I may not only be forgiven past deficiencies and unfaithfulness; but have strength and grace to be more faithful,

and efficient, and successful in the work of the ministry, and in attempts to do good.

Jan. 27th. Attended a church conference. More interesting than usual. I trust the measure of visiting the members, by a committee, will prove to have been beneficial. More anxiety expressed than usual, for a revival.

Feb. 27th. Felt this morning a lighter heart than I have for a long time past. I want to believe that the Lord has heard my supplications. But I am too unworthy to be thus specially visited by God. And yet I know he does interpose in my behalf. To him I am indebted for all I have and am; and in thousands of instances, I can say he has interposed for my help in temporal things, and in things pertaining to my office-work; and to him I desire to ascribe the praise. O, for more confidence in God. Lord, increase my faith.

March 30th. Two young ladies called to converse on the subject of offering themselves to the church, on the morrow. They appeared well. How delightful to see these precious lambs come, of their own accord, and seek admission to the fold. I trust, the good Shepherd will keep them, and feed them. O may the number be greatly multiplied.

April 23d. Much tenderness and anxiety, while pleading with my only helper, this morning. At five, went to the inquiry meeting: from fifteen to twenty present. Some were indulging a trembling hope. It looked encouraging. Still I tremble lest the work should not go on.

April 28th. Arose with a damper on my feelings, fearing that the work of God might not go forward. I went and threw myself down in my kneeling-place, in distress, for mercy. I felt to plead with earnestness, for some time, bathed in tears, that God would, in his sovereign mercy, in spite of our unworthiness, for the sake of his own glory, carry out and extend his work effectually and gloriously. I saw that he was able to do great things for us; but I obtained no assurance that he would; though it seemed I could no tlet him go, except he bless us. My feelings tender and solemn, through the day.

April 29th. A still deeper sense of unworthiness, insufficiency, and frailty. I feel that I am nothing, and can do nothing of myself, to carry forward this work of grace. I could only lie, and beg that God would, of his own rich and self-moved mercy, make me what I should be, and carry on his work of grace mightily among us. I felt that a mighty work was needed, and that nothing, short of a mighty work of grace, would meet the exigencies of this place. I saw that he was able, and tried to get hold of his mighty arm; and for a considerable time before any other person had arisen in the house, I lay on my knees, and wept and pleaded, unwilling to let the Lord go, without some assurance of blessing. But this assurance I did not obtain.

April 30th. The enemy of truth is not dislodged. What God has already wrought among us, though cause for great thankfulness, I seem almost to overlook, in comparison with the greater work of mercy, which needs to be wrought. I fear God will not have mercy upon us. I know he is infinitely able to effect the work we need; but I fear it is not his purpose. I fear that there is something among us, which renders it inconsistent for him thus to bless us. I cannot plead for the blessing with much confidence, on my own account, as being what I desire; for I am not worthy to witness such a blessing, or to be instrumental in promoting it; nor can I offer, as an availing plea, the well-being of these multitudes; for they do not deserve it. But may I not plead the honor of his own great name?—that he will glorify himself, in defending his own cause; and I think, I try to use this plea. But here again, unbelief suggests, he can glorify himself in another way, with respect to those who are so ill deserving as we are. I get no assurance of the blessing we need. I feel that I lie, and that we all lie at the sovereign mercy of a holy God, and that it would be just if we should be left; and still, I am distressed. What is for us, I know not. The Lord have mercy on me, and give me grace and faith, and remove whatever is in me that may hinder his work, and teach me to do his will. The Lord have mercy on us all!

May 3d. Had some sense of God's sovereignty and great-

ness, and the suitableness of his having mercy on whom he will have mercy; and of his amazing condescension in regarding the prayers of such worthless, helpless creatures, as we are. I felt exceedingly small in his sight, unworthy, even, to stand still, and see the salvation of God. It seemed, that neither my prayers, nor any thing I can do, could avail much with the holy, glorious Saviour of the universe. My feelings were tender. I felt to take a low place; and I tried to commit myself, and my people, to him; and I rejoice to know, that he can carry on his glorious work, without my aid; though it is my heart's desire and constant prayer, that I may do nothing to hinder the work, but something to advance it.

May 17th. Preached, not with high feelings and self-confidence, but with a shade of despondency. How unworthy to have a standing in the sacred ministry. The Lord help me to know, and do my duty, in the circumstances in which I am placed.

June 21st. This, I am reminded, is my birth-day. Is it possible that I have lived fifty-eight years? How rapid have been their flight. How have they been filled with sins and perplexities, toils and despondencies! and yet how many, and great, and constant the mercies of the Lord! How little have I accomplished with all my struggles! I have much cause for thankfulness, and much, very much, for humiliation.

Nov. 11th. Though a member of the church came to me, at noon, and told me, he never heard a better sermon, yet this did but little relieve my feelings. The facts, that I am so interrupted, have so little time for study, when I need so much, and that I am so perplexed, embarrassed, cramped and discouraged, that I can accomplish but little when I enter my study—these facts must, and do, so affect my preparation for the pulpit, that I am exceedingly tried. It is a great affliction. I feel that I am not doing properly the work of an evangelist, and that I cannot expect a blessing on such defective, distracted services.

Sabbath, Feb. 3d, 1839. Rose not early, and felt not well. Had an impressive sense of my frailty. This impression was increased by an account in the Christian Mirror, on which my eye

fell, of the death of my class-mate, Rev. Perez Chapin, of Pownal. With this beloved brother I spent a night in September last, when he appeared in perfect health. I was much surprised with this intelligence. Felt deeply my need of help. Preached twice. To my naturally desponding mind things look rather dark; but I desire, and pray, to be enabled to trust in God.

Sabbath, March 3d. A cold stormy morning. Prospect of but few people at the sanctuary; but be they few, or many, I am called to speak to them in the name of the Lord. Who is sufficient for these things? I feel, that I am not, especially at such a time as this. Stupidity prevails; delusive error abounds; our church is in trouble. Our nation is chargeable with high-handed wickedness, and wickedness too, which is connived at, and even supported, by a majority. We are threatened with war. Already thousands are on the way to the field of battle. Others of our young men are detached. Our physician is appointed Surgeon General of the army.

April 1st, 1840. My heart seemed melted into tenderness; and I felt an ardent panting after the favor, guidance and aid of my only helper, that he would bestow upon me, and my family and people, his abundant grace; and strengthen me for my work, and give success; for my insufficiency I deeply felt.

June 21st. This proves to be my birth-day. Threescore years have fled, since I first saw the light. I feel admonished and humbled; admonished, that I am far in the down hill of life; humbled, that I have accomplished so little good, during this length of time.

Aug. 2d. How solemn is the Sabbath! How responsible the work of it! Numerous souls are coming to the sanctuary, to hear the word of God, from my feeble lips. How insufficient for these things! How much I need assistance, not only to divide the word rightly, but to do it with right feelings, and in a manner adapted to make proper impressions. Was enabled to speak with ease to myself, and with some feeling, and to do better, as to matter and manner, than my fears, and feel that I have reason to be thankful.

April 9th, 1841. Felt deeply the need of divine guidance and grace, for myself, and also for the members of my dear family. Unusually solicitous for my sons. They are now thrown upon this ensnaring, treacherous, disappointing world; and with nothing but their hands to aid them, are struggling hard to acquire a living. I tried to commend them to God anew, and to implore his direction and assistance, and his blessing, to succeed them, so far that they may be useful members of society, and especially, that by their influence, they may aid the cause of truth and religion, and inherit, in the end, a better portion than this world gives to any of its children.

June 7th. Endeavored to commit my way unto the Lord; and to implore his direction and blessing, as needed. I felt also to commit my dear family to him, as a separation takes place W., who is, this day, twenty-one years of age, leaves the parental roof. He goes in company with his mother, but does not return with her. The Lord preserve him from every snare and temptation, prosper his way, and render him useful.

April 24th, 1842. With much feeling and many tears, I sought the Lord for help. Distressed in view of my insufficiency for the work, which needs to be done, and in view of the state of things among us, and in our country. Our Zion is covered with a cloud. Oh! our thoughtless youth. I tremble for them. I fear that the people of God do not feel enough for them. Where are the wrestling Jacobs among us? Except the Lord interpose, many among us must perish. The Lord direct me.

Dec. 31st. I think I can record, that during the year that has now closed, I have had more tenderness, and fervency, and earnestness of spirit, in pleading with God for mercy, for help and for grace, than heretofore. I have deeply felt my need of help from God, and unto God I have cried from day to day. Probably have never shed so many tears, in any former year, as during the past. It seems to me, that my soul has panted after God, his grace and help. It has seemed, that God was near. I could plead with him, and leave my cause with him. I have had no rapturous feeling; know not, that I have experienced any special

manifestation of the light of God's countenance; yet I have felt a degree of quiet and calmness, after crying to God for help, and leaving my cause with him. Very often, when I have risen from my bed, before the light of day appeared, such a sense of my frailty, insufficiency, unworthiness and wants, has rushed upon me, that I could but fall upon my knees, and only give vent to my feelings, and plead for mercy, for a time, before I could specify any other petition. And though I know not, that I have received answers to my prayers for the prosperity and enlargement of the church, the revival of religion, and the conversion of sinners, yet my prayers for myself and family seem to have been answered, to some extent. Sicknesses have been healed and life prolonged; guidance and aid have been realized, in my preparation for public duties, and in the performance of them, beyond my fears, or what I had reason to expect. And beyond my expectation, too, I have been enabled to meet pecuniary demands, when things looked dark. Yet such are my deficiencies, my unprofitableness and unworthiness, that it seems too much for me to expect, that my prayers will be answered. I feel, that I have great reason for thankfulness and for trusting in God; and my earnest desire is, that I may be enabled to trust in God more unwaveringly. May the past be forgiven; and may I have grace to live to better purpose, the little time I may be continued.

Jan. 1*st*, 1843. The year begins with the Sabbath. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." First in the order of time, as well as first in interest from its magnitude and importance. First in the day, and first in the year. How much more becoming sinful, dying mortals, to spend the first day of the year in contemplating the rapid flight of their probation, in inquiring into their preparation for death, and in imploring forgiveness for the past, and grace for the future, than to spend it in vain mirth, as too many do. Preached from Job 16: 22. When a few years are come then I shall go the way, whence I shall not return. Think I have not been left, this day, entirely to my own native barrenness.

Jan. 16*th*. Rose early, and read awhile in the Apocalypse—

Mysterious book! How little do I certainly know of it! Oh to be enlightened. My soul pants after a knowledge of divine things. How pleasant it would be, to have more time for reading.

Oct. 29*th.* I find that it is just thirty years, to-day, since I preached in Norridgewock, for the first time. I was then thirty-three years of age. Thirty years have I spent in the ministry, in Norridgewock, and vicinity. Whether I have done any good, and how much, if any, the great day will disclose. I fear, it will be found to have been but little. It will be a great mercy, if I am not reckoned an unprofitable servant. At any rate, I am admonished, that my ministry must be drawing near its close. How many men, of far greater promise, have been taken away, and not allowed to spend half the time in the ministry, that has been allowed me. Mysterious are the ways of Providence.

Nov. 24*th.* Conscience reproved me for unfaithfulness, in omitting to converse with the young people visiting us, last evening, on the subject of religion, and to pray with them, as has been my custom.

Aug. 30*th*, 1845. Had some serious reflections, contemplating the Being and perfections of God, and his wonderful works in the natural, as well as in the moral world. I had such a sense of my circumscribed knowledge of them, as distressed me. I felt such a desire, to see and know more of God and his works, as caused me to weep, almost aloud. O! to see and know more of the glorious God, and of his wonderful works, and to be more conformed to his will, and efficiently devoted to his service. But my desires are ineffectual. Here I plod along, and make but little advances, if any, in the knowledge of divine things, and in conformity to the divine will.

March 20*th*, 1849. Rose, panting after the divine blessing on me and mine, and for aid in duty. In retirement, implored earnestly God's mercy for all the members of my family, for my grandchildren, the church, the children of the church, and those among us, who have long stood aloof from Christ and his gospel.

Sept. 1*st.* Autumn has again arrived. How rapid has been

the flight of summer. How soon my waning life will have run out. The thought of leaving the world, without having accomplished more, is humiliating.

Sept. 13*th.* My usual routine of exercises, in the morning, is the following: I rise when it begins to be light, feeling not very vigorous; but feel brighter after having taken my shower-bath. Then, such a sense of responsibility, insufficiency and need of light, direction and help, rushes upon me, as brings me upon my knees in earnest supplication, with many tears. After unburdening my soul at the mercy-seat, which is a great relief, I go about my secular concerns, which usually occupy me till breakfast. After breakfast, and prayers in the family, I go to my study. To-day, I entered it earlier than usual, and fixed on a subject for a sermon, and wrote through the day.

During the year 1846, for a period of five continuous months, he was laid aside from his labors, by bodily indisposition; and from the same cause, for about three months, in the year following. Afterwards, at different times, there were successive weeks, when he was unable to preach. But still, usually, he kept on his way, with a singular energy of determination; writing and preaching, about as in former days. In the year 1850, his buildings were all put in a state of complete repair, his grounds enlarged and adorned, his important debts all cancelled; and thus, through the agency of a benignant Providence, his mind was relieved of a burden, which had not ceased to press heavily, for the space of near forty years. His merciful God had endow-

ed one of his own family with the means, and the disposition, to bring him effectual relief.

During his illness in the year 1846, he journeyed a part of the summer, in company with his eldest son, for the benefit of his health. The following is part of a letter written by him, at that period.

SARATOGA SPRINGS, *July* 25, 1846.

MY DEAR WIFE:

The truly welcome letters from yourself and S—— and M——, reached me Wednesday noon, the time I expected them. I should have been sadly disappointed, had they not arrived. We had fixed on the next day to leave. But the fortnight had slipped away so quickly, and we were thought to be improving so well, we concluded to defer it, till the first of next week; and spend the Sabbath here, and not in New-York. The letters gave us great pleasure. It was affecting to perceive so much affection and concern expressed in them. Tell Sarah, I love to have her think of me with affection, but do not wish she should "keep awake, nights," on my account. Tell her, that she, and the other members of our family, not excepting the dear little ones, are not out of mind long at a time. They constitute no small part of my burden at the mercy seat. And it is no small relief, that while I am absent from them, and can afford them no assistance, I may implore the protection and blessing of One, who is ever present with them, who knows their wants, and is able to do them all the good they need.

As I stated in my last, that we expected to leave here on Thursday, you may possibly be expecting me at home, before the first sabbath in August. But that I shall not be able to accomplish. I must spend one night in Troy. I shall not reach New-York till Wednesday or Thursday; and must stop, a day or two, in that city.

I have written three letters to-day, before this; one to Benson, one to Wheelock, and a long one to my sister, Barber, at Enosburgh.

We have truly a pleasant company—somewhere about forty; a third part of whom are ladies, and about half of the gentlemen, ministers. It is interesting to see this company all bowed around the domestic altar morning and evening; all, or nearly so, professors of religion. Yesterday the widow of Daniel A. Clark, and her son, came. He is settled in the ministry.

I have not been at all anxious to become acquainted with every body here; but have been much inclined to be alone, and have indulged that inclination, to a greater extent than most others; still I could not help forming acquaintances that are very pleasant, and I have become much attached to numbers. I should regret leaving this delightful place, were it not for the fact, that I have ties so much stronger, acquaintances so much dearer, and duties to perform so much more interesting, elsewhere. This being the fact, I can break away without grief, and even feel glad to leave it, and all the pleasure-seeking multitudes, as well as invalids, that resort here; and wend my way back to my own dear family and people, and to my work, arduous and responsible though it be; and, I hope, I may be strengthened to resume that work, for a little time. It must be short, at best.

The following are extracts from letters written to his son, William Henry, at New-York.

Aug. 27, 1846.

Edward has just informed me, that you have not yet gone to the South, but will go, next week. I suspend my preparations for the Sabbath, for a few moments, to write a line to you, lest it should not reach you, before you leave.

I have preached every Sabbath, since I returned home, and expect to preach, next Sabbath. I have received some accession of strength. Your mother is unwell, and seems threatened with fever. The reading of your last letter made us feel rather sad, as it brought to mind things, so likely to be realized. The social enjoyment of our family circle is, in all probability, to be more and more interrupted. It seems to be the will of Providence,

that children, to a great extent, as they arrive to mature years, shall be separated from their parents. And then time and the destroyer will make inroads upon our number, and thin our ranks; so that if not locally separated, some of our number will soon be missing from the social circle. After reading your letter, and remarking upon it, on looking up, I perceived, that your mother's face was covered.

Since changes must take place in our family, and we know not what, or when they will occur, it concerns us to be prepared for changes, whatever they may be, and whenever they may occur. Aware, that we are liable to separations, at any hour, let us be prepared to meet, in a world of purer affection, and nobler bliss; "give diligence to make calling and election sure."

April 1, 1847.

We thank you for details given us of your sickness, and be assured, our hearts were deeply affected by the fact, that you had been brought apparently so near to the eternal world, as to expect that your immortal spirit would, in a few hours, enter it, while you imagined what would be our feelings, when your lifeless remains should be presented at our door. We are affected, in view of the mercy of God, in sparing your life, and exempting us from such a cup of woe. We wish you to express our warmest thanks to Mrs. W. for her kindness to our son; and to other friends, who have shown so distinguished kindness to one dear to us, when sick among strangers. Our prayer, in their behalf, is that our heavenly Father, who has seen all, and is able, will bestow on them a rich reward. Run not any great risks, for the sake of securing a little *trash;* much as it may be needed, life is worth more; and so is health, especially at your age. At my time of life, the system loses, in a measure, its tone; the powers of life become less vigorous; infirmities creep on; chronic complaints make their appearance; and as a consequence of all, one feels indisposed, and has not the ambition, courage and vigor to accomplish what he once could. But this is not so disastrous, as for a young man, in the prime of life, to be laid aside.

Your sickness must have interrupted your business, and diminished the profits. This getting-rich-quick, is not so sure and easy, I apprehend, as some have imagined. Property is a coy, treacherous, slippery thing. It is hard for most to get possession of it; and when it is acquired, it is difficult to get a *title* to it, that will insure its retention. Yet some portion of it is very convenient, and seems to be really needful. Though a little more would be convenient for me, I have no expectation of increasing mine. How pleasant to turn away and contemplate "durable riches and righteousness." Let us strive to "make our calling and election sure;" that we may have comfort amid the perplexities of life, and support, when the world, and all its objects, shall recede from our view.

December 14, 1847.

As I was visiting a family, the other day, a man offered me the loan of a book, to be read at my *leisure*. I told him, I had no leisure. I know not how it is in New-York, but with us, at Norridgewock, it is a fact, that the days, about this time, are very short. I have to economize, somewhat rigidly, to secure time for my official work.

I must again urge you not to let your business cause you to expose or neglect your health. We thought, and talked much of you, and Edward, on Thanksgiving day, experiencing a lack of social enjoyment, occasioned by your absence. George, and his pleasant family, were with us.

July 26, 1848.

Will you believe me, when I say, I have just returned from the funeral of our much esteemed and ever faithful friend, Dea. William W. D——? It is even so; the faithful tomb has unveiled its bosom, and received his remains to its trust. He fell asleep in Jesus, yesterday, while in his field—dropped down without a moment's warning. One groan, and a gasp or two, were all the signs of life, exhibited by him, after he fell. God has called his servant home, and in a manner, to save him from the agonies of a lingering death, the pains of a long and wasting sickness, and the

anguish of leaving his plans and designs unaccomplished; and of seeing the distress of weeping friends around his dying bed. His trials are over—his struggles to support religion; the peace and prosperity of the church; the support of the gospel; and the cause of godliness. He was a useful man, an important pillar in the church. I know not how to do without him. I highly prized his suggestions, advice and co-operation. I have lost, not only an important helper, but a tried and faithful friend. But the Lord has done it, and his work is perfect. His church is infinitely dearer to him, than it is to us.

"Yet in the midst of death, and grief,
This thought, our sorrows shall assuage;
Our Father and our Saviour live—
Christ is the same through every age."

The consideration that I have accomplished so little for my family, or for the church and cause of Christ, makes me desirous to do something more before I am called away; if it might be. Yet what hope could I have of doing better, if life should be prolonged a little? I leave all with Him who rules in wisdom.

NORRIDGEWOCK, *March* 3, 1851.

MY DEAR WILLIAM:

Yours of the 17th ult. reached me about the middle of last week. Being unusually pressed, and somewhat indisposed, I could not conveniently answer it till after the Sabbath. My work you know, cannot, like that of other men, be put over to another week. Besides, I thought it best to defer a little, as I learned that S. was writing at that time.

When the news came by telegraph to Portland, of the destruction of the St. Charles Hotel, we were in a state of anxious suspense as to your safety; and our anxiety, we saw, must continue for some time, as it did till we received your letter, fourteen days after the fire.

* * * * * * *

Your account of the conflagration of the Hotel was thrilling; but I need explanation. Why did you put yourself in situations so perilous, when there was no more necessity for it?

* * * * * * *

You have great cause to be thankful for deliverance from perils, and for the remarkable prosperity which has attended you hitherto. "Be not high-minded but fear." Keep in mind your entire dependence. Do not for a moment lose sight of it. You have been solemnly admonished how easy it is for riches to take wings and fly away; and how easy and how common for the frail life of the possessor to be taken from the enjoyment of them at any time. We feel no ordinary interest in your welfare, life and health.

With respect to religious affairs, they remain much as they were in the autumn; though I think some increased interest is apparent, especially in relation to external things. A subscription has been raised for painting the meeting-house. Our congregation has been rather increasing for some time; and as a further improvement, we have a good bell. It is known whence it came; and the donor will not soon be forgotten. We love to hear its peals. At a conference, on Thursday last, one individual offered herself for admission to the church. It appeared at this meeting, that some of the members had experienced quickening influences, and were praying for a revival of religion with more than their usual earnestness.

There is a very heavy body of snow on the ground; the fences are almost covered; but they will be visible again, I think, in the Spring. May Providence protect and keep you.

Your affectionate father,

J. PEET.

The following is from a letter to his eldest son and wife, written by him immediately after their marriage.

NORRIDGEWOCK, *July 15th*, 1851.

MY DEAR SON AND DAUGHTER:

A letter and paper came to us on Saturday night, informing us that your marriage was solemnized on Wednesday last in the far off city of New-York. So then your long contemplated union has at length been consummated, and you, who were two, are no longer "twain."

* * * * * * *

I would say to you, as I have said to others, in similar circumstances, that this is an important period in the history of your lives. You now enter more fully upon the great theatre of action, as a family, as members of the community, as members of the church; and as such are now to act your part. How important that you act it well. See to it that you do it in a manner worthy of your abilities, your advantages, and your professions. You are happy now; and it is perhaps the great object with you to continue to be so. We hope for your continued happiness. But you are aware that our Bible and our religion teach us, that we are not to live merely for present enjoyment, but are to be active to do good, to practise self-denial, indeed to find our happiness in so doing. Besides, happiness will not continue, as a matter of course. Something is requisite to maintain and perpetuate it;—the faithful performance of duty, and efforts to provide the means. Fidelity to duty, and activity and energy in the work of life, are essential. The inspired direction is: "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." This precept is to be heeded, though it involve self-denial.

May you be returned in safety, prosecute the work of life successfully, and receive in the kind providence of God, in the way of duty, all that prosperity and happiness which it shall be consistent for Him to bestow, and best for you to receive.

All send love to you both, and to W. I am daily expecting to hear from him.

From your affectionate father,

J. PEET.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS LAST SICKNESS AND HIS DEATH.

He preached twice on the second Sabbath in June, 1851; when he was taken ill, and prostrated for the summer. His work was now almost finished.

> "With labor spent, no longer can he wield
> The heavy falchion, or sustain the shield,
> O'erwhelmed with darts."

During this period his bodily sufferings were considerable; but his mind was comfortable and serene. For the most part he was able to see and converse with his friends; and truly it was a privilege to be with him, and listen to his words. There was a ripeness in his views, and a fixedness in his faith that made the visitor feel himself in the presence of a sage, like Paul the aged, lifted above the mists of sin, and the clouds that bewilder sense. His faith was "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." He conversed much of the state of the church, the country, and the

world; of the blissful changes which the gospel shall effect, and of Heaven. Beyond his own anticipations, and those of his friends, his system, in a degree, rallied; so that in September he was enabled to attend the meeting of the American Board in the city of Portland; after which, in company with Mrs. Peet, he proceeded to New York and spent some weeks comfortably with his son, resident in that city.

The following are extracts from his journal after the suspension of his public labors, in June:-

June 21*st*. This day makes me 71 years of age; and the fact administers a solemn admonition. I have passed my "threescore years and ten," and my illness is a still louder admonition, as it may terminate my earthly course. That it will, is the opinion of others; and I am led to inquire whether I am ready. For this I desire and strive.

Sabbath, June 22*d*. Had a distressed night. The physician was called in early. I had nearly lost consciousness. He watched me for a while to see whether life was departing. At length I revived, relieved in a measure from previous distress. Mr. E. H. called, who had kindly come to preach to my people. As I roused a little I found it some comfort that they were to be supplied. A collection of about twenty dollars was taken up for the Maine Missionary Society.

July 10*th*. Interrupted in my sleep; but better this morning than yesterday. Wrote names on 170 papers—Messengers, Journal of Missions, Day Spring, and Mother's Magazine, to be distributed among my people. Received a letter from my only sister, in Vermont, who is two years older than myself, a widow, having three sons and three daughters, and twenty-one grandchildren.

July 28*th*. Hope I am improving; but still languid and restless. Have not left the house for more than six weeks.

Aug. 1*st.* This morning had a most refreshing and invigorating ride with Mr. S., which seemed to give me new life for the rest of the day.

Sabbath, Aug. 3*d.* Still improving. Thankful that it is so well with me, and that my people are again supplied with preaching. They have been supplied every Sabbath excepting two, since the 8th of June. Mr. S. preached and attended the Monthly Concert; and will preach on the two next Sabbaths.

Aug. 4*th.* There is now some prospect that I may resume my work soon; if so, I cannot expect to pursue it long. I wait the indications of Providence. Hope I may be submissive. Rode a few miles accompanied by my wife.

Sabbath, Aug. 24*th.* Rose at 5 o'clock, after a comfortable night. Contemplated my indebtedness to God for my being and preservation, for giving me a family; for what he has done for me and for my family. I am permitted to indulge the hope that all the members are made the trophies of his grace. May it prove to be a reality. What cause for thankfulness, also, for his preserving mercy and providential care and kindness. I longed to have more transforming views, and a more affecting sense of his goodness and mercy. Six persons have gone to meeting from our house, leaving me alone. How happy that my people are so acceptably supplied with preaching. May a divine blessing attend preaching to-day, and the labors of Mr. ——— among us be instrumental of saving good to souls.

Aug. 30*th.* Attended a church conference; the first religious meeting I have attended since the first of June. I read and remarked upon the first part of the first chapter of Philippians; after which Mr. S. prayed, and others remarked and prayed. Allusions to myself so affectionate, and thanks for my recovery in part, to health, so feelingly employed, caused me to be humble, as being unworthy of such regard.

Sabbath, Aug. 31*st.* In the morning went to the sanctuary for the first time since the 8th of June. It was pleasant to look upon the congregation again after so long a time; join in the public worship of God; listen to the sweet tones of the organ, and hear the gospel preached. Mr. S. preached on the superior blessedness of giving in aid of the cause of Christ, and a collection of more than

thirty dollars was taken for foreign missions. I did not attend in the afternoon, nor at the concert at 5 o'clock.

September 1st. So then the summer has passed, and I have preached but two Sabbaths, since it commenced. But have I lost the summer? True, I have not performed any manual labor, nor done any thing for the cause of Christ and the Gospel; and I have made work for my family. Still, as I have been under the discipline of the Divine hand, and been solemnly admonished of my frailty, I ought to have been profited, and perhaps may have been, more than if I had been allowed to labor, as usual. Surely, I have cause for thankfulness.

Sabbath, Sept. 7th. Brother H. preached for us; supplied at home by Mr. B. I attended meeting, and assisted in the administration of the sacrament.

His eldest son and wife, and his youngest daughter, September 10th, attended their parents to Waterville, and saw them comfortably set out from thence, by railroad, for New-York. Having spent two days in Portland, and several days, including a Sabbath, with a nephew at Fall River, he reached New-York, on the 18th. Though feeble, and evidently impressed with the conviction that his stay below was extremely uncertain, he enjoyed much his visit with his son, and other friends in that city; and seems to have been equally, as at any former period, an interested observer of the works of nature and art; as well as alive to matters of philanthropy and piety. His principal home was at the family mansion of Mr. W., in Brooklyn.

Sabbath, Sept. 21st. Sleep during the night much interrupted; but feel much at home, as the family are very kind and generous.

Tried to commit myself and family to my Heavenly Father's care and disposal.

Sept. 26th. Received a slip from E., inclosed in a letter to W., informing us that all is well at home; and the pulpit provided for, several Sabbaths to come. W. took his carriage, and going to the ferry we took in the wife of cousin H. Her sister and Mrs. M. met there by arrangement, making six of us, in two carriages; and being joined by Mr. W. and wife, all rode to Greenwood Cemetery, a truly wonderful place. We spent an hour or two among the numerous monumental receptacles of the dead. The cemetery contains three hundred acres, beautifully variegated by swell and dale; the underbrush removed, and the grounds densely shaded by trees rendered smooth. It is solemn to me. What a multitude are already deposited here. Returning we went to "First Place," and examined one of ———'s houses. Ascending to the top, we had the most beautiful, grand and extensive views I ever beheld. All, pressingly invited, went to Mr. W.'s and took tea.

September 29th. Mr. T. called, and walked with me to the Navy Yard. Here are exhibited in due order, long rows of large cannon, suitable for large ships of war, and numerous stacks of cannon-balls. I also examined the interior of a man of war, a large vessel, rigged for service, having three rows of guns on each side. Such are the formidable and costly preparations for the destruction of human life; such the deadly implements for human slaughter. Cannons, balls and shells! How much more is expended for destroying life, than for saving souls.

Sept. 30th. Mr. T. called, and we visited the Glass-house, and Brooklyn Heights, where we had a fine view of New-York. In the afternoon, rode to cousin H.'s, where we spent the night, at the Asylum for the deaf and dumb. The President and his wife, and two sons, who are Professors, and the steward, all of the family of Peet. Also Mrs. M., sister of the President.

Oct. 1st. Made an excursion to the High Bridge. It is a stupendous fabric of exquisite workmanship, having fifteen arches, sixty feet high; on the top of which runs the Croton water, brought forty miles in two cylindrical pipes, three feet in diameter, at a cost of nearly $20,000,000. Spent the afternoon in

visiting the Institution, in its various departments and operations. In the evening were collected in the parlor, some ten or dozen of the Peet race, including Mrs. Meigh's three daughters, and two sons. W. was expected, but did not come. There were present, visitors, Professors and Teachers, several of whom were deaf mutes, who seemed to enjoy themselves well; as they could understand each other and the members of the family. Some of the mutes remained till after prayers.

October 2d. Rose a little past four o'clock. After breakfast and prayers in the family, visited the work-shops, saw the pupils engaged in various branches of mechanism, visited gas-house and gardens. Before commencing their recitations, the pupils were all assembled in the chapel for prayers. One of the Professors explained a few verses of the Scriptures, and led in prayer, by signs, during which, all seemed to give close attention. W. called for us, and we took our leave of these friends and returned to Brooklyn. At Mr. W.'s very cordially received.

He left New-York on the 15th of October, and, on the day following, reached Norridgewock; when, though still feeble, he resumed his public labors, in which with considerable difficulty, and yet without any visible indications of an abrupt conclusion of them, he persevered, till the close of the month of December. On returning home he had the feeling, that his people had been long indulgent to his infirmities, and borne the interruptions in his work occasioned by sickness; and it might be, that for some time, unless he should retire and give place to a successor, their patience would be similarly tried. He did not re-enter the pulpit till they, to their lasting honor and their unspeakable satisfaction in the

retrospect, had expressed their great pleasure at the prospect of again seeing him there. It was their privilege to honor and cherish their beloved minister to the very last. Happy is it for them, that they so understood it; in this excelling many congregations, who have done less worthily. Their own consciences speak comfortably to them, all the churches salute them, and the Saviour will not be unmindful of their steadfast love for His faithful servant, who had spent himself for their benefit.

The following is from a letter to his son in New-York:

October 24, 1851.

E., thinking I might come home fatigued, and scarcely able to preach, had made arrangements for Mr. H. to preach for me, last Sabbath. The expectation is, that next Sabbath, I shall preach. How I shall hold out, I know not. I find some increase of strength, as the result of my journey; but my infirmities are still lurking, and are not to be thrown off. They may be temporarily palliated, but cannot be removed. Great things I cannot expect to accomplish; nor to be continued long amid the enjoyments of this life. Though you cannot remove my bodily infirmities, you have removed from me many, and weighty temporal burdens, cares and perplexities, and contributed greatly to my temporal relief and comfort. It is a great favor to be surrounded with comforts, when in health; it is a greater favor to be thus privileged, when laboring under bodily indisposition and infirmities. But I need to be weaned from the world, and prepared to leave it; for the time of my departure cannot be distant.

In a letter to the same under date of Dec. 1, 1851, he writes:

I have great cause for thankfulness. I have preached thirteen times since my return, without particular inconvenience. I have written several sermons, and revised and amended others which I have preached. I have also done some things, about my house and premises, in getting ready for winter; in some instances laboring moderately all day, though not without fatigue. We had a pleasant Thanksgiving-season. G. and wife, and four children, and W. D. with us, making twelve in number; and we pretty well used up two turkeys. We should have been much gratified, could you have been present. A William was present, and we were pleased to have his company, but should have been glad to have another William.

* * * * * * *

Let us know when you go West. Do not let the world overcome you.

Sabbath, Dec. 7th. Went to meeting with my usual sense of responsibility, but preached with more freedom and comfort than usual. Baptized three children.

Dec. 13th. Visited Mr. H.'s family in deep affliction; having heard of the death of a son, just arrived at California. I conversed some time, and prayed with them.

Sabbath, Dec. 28th. Felt not so bright as I could wish—another stormy Sabbath—but found more people at meeting than I had expected. Felt not so vigorous as usual. Some disposition to faintness, as I commenced speaking; but it passed off, as I proceeded, and I spoke with nearly as much ease as usual.

The last date above was the last Sabbath in the year, and the last of his ministering, personally, in an earthly sanctuary. On the afternoon of that day he preached his last sermon from the second verse of the seventh chapter of Ezekiel: "Also thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God unto the land of Israel; an end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land." In the language of the sermon preached at his funeral,—

He applied it to the end of the year, but it had an appropriateness to the occasion, of which neither he nor his hearers were aware. The end had indeed come; not only of the year, but of his ministry among you. The last two hymns which he read to be sung, could not have been more appropriately selected, if he had known that he was standing before you for the last time. As the words of those hymns were read by him, and then repeated by the choir in sacred song, and the sound of them was prolonged by the tones of the organ, how little did any of the hearers of them dream, that the Providence of God would so soon give them such a solemn and affecting confirmation.

One of these Hymns was the six hundred and first:

The swift declining day,
How fast its moments fly,
While evening's broad and gloomy shade
Gains on the western sky.

Ye mortals mark its pace,
And use the hours of light;
For know its Maker can command
An instant, endless night.

Give glory to the Lord,
Who rules the rolling sphere;
Submissive at his footstool bow
And seek salvation there.

Then shall new lustre break
Through all the horrid gloom,
And lead you to unchanging light,
In your celestial home.

The other Hymn was the six hundred and second.

Awake—Awake! each sluggish soul,
Awake—and view the setting sun!
See how the shades of death advance,
Ere half the task of life is done!

Soon will he close our drowsy eyes,
Nor shall we hear these warnings more;

Soon will the mighty Judge approach;
E'en now he stands before the door!

To-day, attend his gracious voice!
And hear the summons which he sends :—
"Awake! for on this passing hour,
Thy long eternity depends."

O Saviour! let these awful scenes
Be ever present to our view:
Teach us to gird our loins about,
And trim our dying lamps anew.

Then, when the king of terror comes,
Our souls shall hail the happy day;
Haste then, O Saviour, from above,
Nor let thy chariot wheels delay!

Monday, Dec. 29, 1851, he wrote for the last time in his journal: "Weather much warmer. Felt not as well as usual. Wrote a letter to D. Shepley. Commenced preparing a sermon." The sermon commenced was designed for the first Sabbath of a new year; founded on the first chapter of Ecclesiastes, at the fourth verse: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." In the discourse, he proposed to consider the fact announced in the passage, and the influence which it is proper the fact should have in directing life, during the period of its brief continuance. He illustrated the fact, that though the earth continues to be peopled, and its population increases, still each generation quickly passes away, by a general reference to the disappearance of men in the early ages of the world; of the

Pilgrim fathers, Revolutionary heroes, and eminent statesmen of our republic; and by a more particular portrayal of the changes in Norridgewock during thirty-eight years, commencing with the year 1814. In that time six hundred of the inhabitants of the town had been removed by death; not including those who, from year to year, had removed, and died in other locations. In fifty years death had removed one hundred and five members from the Congregational church.

He wrote some on Monday, and some on Tuesday, and on Wednesday, which was the last day of the year, as he completed the first, and was just entering upon the second division of his subject, he dropped his pen, never again to resume it. His right arm was palsied. The Master, coming for him, found the veteran laborer still in the field, his hand still grasping the implements of service. It was at once apparent, that the work of life was fully done. He was now going to his rest; as the husbandman wearied and worn, his work finished, goes to his repose—as the stars sink in the misty west, to rise again in the glories of the east.

As early as the following Saturday, his power of speech began to fail. The first Sabbath of the New Year came. His people assembled, as usual, at the House of God; and it was to receive a request

from their minister, that he might be remembered in their prayers; and hear his message to them, characteristic alike of his affection and his humility; "I feel, my dear people, that my work is done—would that I could say, it is well done." Some had heard that their minister was sick, and some had previously heard nothing. As it was known by individuals that he had, in part, prepared a sermon for them, expecting to deliver it on that morning, it was concluded to send for it. It was brought, and read, and the assembly silently sought their homes. He lingered, in much of bodily suffering, till the 17th day of the month. His son in New-York, just risen from a sick bed, was enabled to visit him, and all his immediate family were about him. To them, and to others who loved, and came to look upon him towards the close of life, he said nothing, except as an expressive countenance is the utterance of significant language.

The sermon at his funeral gives the following narrative of his last days, beginning after the Sabbath immediately following the Wednesday, on which he was smitten.

His bodily strength and power of speech continued to fail more and more. On Tuesday morning, when the County Conference commenced its semi-annual meeting in this house, he sent over to the Conference the same note, requesting prayers, which he had sent to his church and congregation, the Sabbath before.

On Wednesday morning, he thought himself dying. Being asked by his wife if he did not think that death would be to him a happy exchange, he replied, "I cannot doubt it—I cannot doubt it." And although he was evidently distressed because he was not able to converse, so as to give to his family and friends the parting counsels and directions which he wished to give them, he submitted without a murmur to what seemed to be the will of God. "All right, all right," he was heard repeatedly to say. In the course of the afternoon of that day, however, his speech was so far restored for a short season, that he was able to communicate in an intelligible manner, what he wished to say. From this time forward, he seemed to have done with all earthly anxieties and cares. The few words that he was able to speak while the power of speech in any degree remained, were expressive of the trust in God, and the humble, though undoubting confidence that death would be gain, which we should naturally expect, in such a man at the close of such a life. When a brother in the ministry repeated to him those words of the Apostle, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and asked him if he could not also say with the Apostle, that he *knew* that he had such a building, he replied, "I hope I have;" and then, as if he had not done full justice to his feelings, he immediately added, "strong hope, strong hope." And after he had become entirely speechless and helpless, the expression of his eye, as well as the signs which he gave by the slight motions which he was able to make in answer to what was said to him, although he was evidently at times a great sufferer, expressed a uniform resignation to God, an inward peace that passeth all understanding, and a hope that was like an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, taking hold of that within the vail. Thus he lingered till about four o'clock last Tuesday morning, when he calmly and sweetly expired.

On this affecting occasion, therefore, my hearers, we have cause for joy and gratitude to God as well as for sorrow. "The end of that man is peace." Who doubts it? He rests from his labors; rests from toil and trial, though not from joy; rests where they rest not day nor night, crying Holy, Holy, Holy Lord

God Almighty. He has been gathered like a shock of corn fully ripe, into the garner of heaven. God gave him grace to be faithful unto death, and spared him to a good old age. The days of the years of his pilgrimage on earth, were a little more than three score years and ten. But if the length of a man's life is to be measured by the time of his wakeful activity, he has lived as long as a man of ordinary habits would have lived at the advanced age of ninety years. His days were several hours longer than the days of ordinary men, as well as more diligently occupied about his Heavenly Father's business.

And how merciful too, were the orderings of Providence in regard to the circumstances of his death.

He died without having his dying hours embittered by the thoughts of leaving his worldly affairs in an unsettled condition. He could say to all the world as Samuel said to the children of Israel, "I am old and gray-headed; and behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose ass have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?"

He hoped that all his children were heirs of salvation; and he had, perhaps, as little cause for painful anxiety and fear respecting their earthly lot, as a reasonable father could expect in this world of uncertainty and change.

And what may perhaps have been to his mind a consideration of scarcely less importance, he could leave the people of his charge in a united condition: having no divisions among them, and no root of bitterness threatening to spring up and trouble them; a people indeed, from whom it could not but be painful, in itself considered, to part, but from whom he could now part in mutual love.

The following is from the Christian Mirror of the date of January 27th, 1852:

DEAR SIR:

The Somerset Conference held its semi-annual meeting with the Church in Norridgewock, on the 6th and 7th inst. The

weather and travelling being unfavorable, the attendance was not so large as it otherwise would have been. The meeting, however, was a deeply solemn and interesting one, rendered peculiarly so, by the afflictive condition of the people of Norridgewock at the present time. But a few days previous to our meeting, their long revered, and much loved pastor, Rev. J. Peet, was stricken down in the midst of his labors. While in the act of preparing a sermon for the New Year's Sabbath, a paralytic shock, deprived him of the use of his right arm, greatly affected his speech, and prostrated him upon a bed of almost helplessness, which, to human appearance, must shortly prove to him, the bed of death.

It would be impossible for me to describe the heartfelt and touching interest, manifested by those assembled from other churches, in the deeply afflicted family and people of our aged father in the ministry, thus obliged, in the all-wise Providence of God, to regard him as having already preached his last sermon, and soon to be removed to a higher sphere in the Church of God.

For about thirty-eight years has this faithful servant stood upon this out-post of Zion, toiling night and day for the good of his people—a people by no means unprepared to appreciate their minister and his labors—and, although far advanced in life, being nearly seventy-two years of age, he appeared quite as anxious, in his last efforts, as ever, to perform the labors of one in the strength and vigor of life.

Having thus long labored in this county, ministered more or less to all our churches for this length of time, and become endeared to all, nearly, as if he had been their pastor; it is not strange that our meeting, on this occasion, was rendered deeply solemn and affecting by the circumstances under which we were assembled. All felt that father Peet,

"Like a care-worn and weary sentinel,"

was about to

"Lay his armor off, to rest—in heaven."

And why, seeing his work has been well done, and he is *ready* to depart, should we complain at such a Providence?

I shall not report the details of the meeting in full; it is sufficient to say, that much of the time was spent in devotional exercises, in which remarks and prayers were offered, such as the circumstances seemed to require; the remainder, in preaching services, in discussing practical questions, closed with the communion and a collection of $12 in aid of the M. M. Society.

A vote of thanks to the people of N. for their hospitality, and to the choir of singers, for their aid in the services of the meeting, was also passed, and the Conference adjourned without day.

It is devoutly hoped, that the blessing of God may rest on the exercises of this occasion; that the churches of this county, few in number, and feeble as they are, may be greatly refreshed; and that the general dearth of the Spirit's influences, which, by the reports of the churches at this meeting, appears now to exist among us, may be succeeded by timely showers of divine grace. For this, it becomes us, both as ministers and people, to labor and pray.

A. T. LORING, *Scribe.*

SKOWHEGAN, Jan. 16, 1852.

We copy from the same Journal of a subsequent date:

The letter below, from a worthy brother, than whom no one has stronger reasons or better data for a high appreciation of the departed, informs us that death has found another victim in the Congregational ministry of Maine. Ere the feeling of bereavement at the removal of Tobey, Frost and Walker, had wholly subsided, our ministers and churches are called to mourning; for the patriarch of Somerset has also gone. He is believed to have been, at the time of his death, the longest settled pastor, of our denomination, in the State, who still remained pastor of the same flock; and we cannot doubt, that it is a comforting and pleasant thought to the people of Norridgewock, that he who gave the strength of his manhood to the promotion of their welfare, has now made his grave with them.

Two of the brothers above mentioned, Messrs. Frost and Walker, died pastors of the churches over which they were originally ordained, and for whose souls they had watched between

twenty-five and thirty years. Six of their survivors have been in office without change of residence, as long, on an average, if not longer; they are the pastors at Limerick, Waterford, North Yarmouth, Minot, Fryeburg, and Farmington; and following not far behind in time are the pastors at Searsport and Brunswick, and two or three others. Distant be the day, if so it may please God, before another breach shall be made in the consecrated band. But let all have their loins girt, and their lamps trimmed and burning; for who can tell what a day may bring forth?

Our correspondent well understands the proprieties of life; and consequently does not go into the delineation of Mr. Peet's character, as this would be forestalling a brother, to whom the pleasing, mournful office has been intrusted—pleasing, because his subject is a blameless and useful minister of Christ; mournful, because we shall see his face no more. The same motive would restrain us, even if qualified for the service. It will be no interference, however, to mention an incident.

We were a listener to what we suppose was the first sermon which Mr. Peet ever preached. It was in the chapel of the Theological Seminary, of a Sabbath evening, when that chapel was of no larger dimensions than to include the space of two rooms on the lower floor of the building first erected—rooms of the size occupied by students. His subject was the one involved in the passage, "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God, who giveth the increase." This, or something equivalent, was his text. And the general impression made by his discourse has always been revived by the sight and thought of him. There were circumstances which gave it a peculiar fitness. He belonged to that class of men whom it takes long time to estimate in proportion to their real worth. He had none of those factitious qualities which make a little pass for much. He was wholly unpretending, had a low estimate of his own powers, was diffident almost to timidity; but his sincerity and heartiness imparted such force to his thoughts, that by the time his discourse was finished, probably neither classmate nor professor felt disposed to boast superiority over him. His useful life is another beautiful illustration of the Scriptural affirmation, "Them that honor me, I will honor." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

WINSLOW, Feb. 25, 1852.

BRO. CUMMINGS:

The Rev. Josiah Peet, the venerable Pastor at Norridgewock, for a period of almost forty years, died on the 17th inst., in the seventy-second year of his age. His funeral was attended on Saturday last, when a vast assembly thronged the church to attend on fitting exercises. The Rev. Dr. Tappan led in the principal devotional exercise, and the Rev. Mr. Hathaway preached from Ps. xxxvii. 37, "*Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*" It was both instructive and impressive to see the old and feeble, the strong men and the young, the citizens of every persuasion, in every garb and condition, pass around to take their last look of the mortal part of the man, whose life and character not one of them failed to reverence, and whom the larger part loved with an affection singularly strong and tender. On the morning of the next day, the Sabbath, it was the duty of the writer to attempt the conduct of the worship of the bereaved congregation. The scene of the preceding day was still present. It was a struggle to enter upon the exercises of worship. One thought seemed to fill every mind:—*Mr. Peet is dead.* But we remembered that the devout, extensively on that day, would not fail to remember the bereaved family and the bereaved flock; that though he who had long led the devotions of the people was not present, their concern in the Gospel is abiding; and that it was the hand of God which removed the pastor, and it were a flagrant sin to make God's providence an excuse for the neglect of His ordinance—and we gave ourselves to the contemplation of the truth, that God is man's disposer, his hand is in all our blessings and all our trials—with him is human character and human destiny. The people may choose their own minister. But if they have a minister who is a blessing to them, he is nevertheless more properly considered, a gift of God's bestowing, than a possession of their own procuring.

It is no part of my design to write the eulogy of the late beloved pastor of Norridgewock. The excellent discourse of Mr. Hathaway may be given to the public. Still, I may say, that they who have most intimately known Mr. Peet, have the most entirely loved and honored him; and if we take into view the

duration of his ministry, its usually pleasant relations, its singular purity, its extended and enduring fruits, and its desirable termination, it will unquestionably be held to have been, among the more remarkable, that the period has exhibited.

A contemplation of Mr. Peet's early labors, together with the effects of them on his own habits and character as a minister, and on the communities who have enjoyed his labors, may possibly lead to some valuable conclusions, as to the best modes for adoption in supplying destitute regions with the preaching of the Gospel. Mr. Peet, for many years, labored extensively, as an Evangelist; and yet during his whole ministry, he has been the minister of one and the same people. There has been no time, from its commencement up to its close, when a necessity did not exist for untiring mental application. The work of the pastor gave untold weight and value to that of the Evangelist. The minister, who can and does meet continuously, the wants of one and the same people, is, after all, the most effective itinerant laborer. Yours truly.

As every thing pertaining to the death of one that is loved is interesting, the insertion of the hymns sung at his funeral may be a favor to some:

Hymn 1st.

"Servant of God, well done,
Rest from thy loved employ:
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy."

The voice at midnight came,
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame,
He fell—but felt no fear.

Tranquil amidst alarms,
It found him on the field,
A veteran slumbering on his arms,
Beneath the red-cross shield.

His spirit, with a bound,
Left its encumbering clay;
His tent, at sunrise, on the ground,
A darkened ruin, lay.

The pains of death are past,
Labor and sorrow cease,
And, life's long warfare closed at last,
His soul is found in peace.

Soldier of Christ, well done!
Praise be thy new employ;
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour's joy.

Hymn 2d.

Oh, for the death of those
Who slumber in the Lord!
Oh, be like theirs my last repose,
Like theirs, my last reward.

Their bodies in the ground,
In silent hope may lie,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound
Shall call them to the sky.

Their ransomed spirits soar
On wings of faith and love
To meet the Saviour they adore,
And reign with him above.

With us their names shall live
Through long succeeding years,
Embalmed with all our hearts can give,
Our praises and our tears.

Oh, for the death of those
Who slumber in the Lord!
Oh, be like theirs my last repose,
Like theirs my last reward.

HYMN 3D.

PASTOR, thou art gone to rest;
We will not weep for thee;
For thou art now where oft on earth
Thy spirit longed to be.

BROTHER, thou art gone to rest;
Thine is an earthly tomb;
But Jesus summoned thee away,
Thy Saviour called thee home.

HUSBAND, thou art gone to rest;
Thy toils and cares are o'er,
And sorrow, pain, and suffering, now
Shall ne'er distress thee more.

FATHER, thou art gone to rest;
Thy prayers for us are o'er;
But Saints in light, have welcomed thee
To heaven's blissful shore.

PASTOR, thou art gone to rest;
And this shall be our prayer:
That, when we reach our journey's end,
Thy glory we may share.

"Devout men" carried him to his burial, and his remains lie interred in a tasteful family-inclosure in the burying-ground at the lower end of the village of Norridgewock, on the north side of the river. At the head of his grave has been erected a pyramidal shaft, of Italian marble, on a granite base;—a fitting tribute of affection. But though the spot of his grave were unmarked, neither the love and gratitude of living men, nor the faithful care of his Heavenly Father, without whom, not a hair of his

MR. PEET'S MONUMENT

IN THE CEMETERY AT NORRIDGEWOCK.

head fell to the ground, while he was living; would suffer his name to pass into oblivion, now that he is gone. Wealth or station may secure for worthless and evil men equipage and pomp of funeral solemnities—the ceremony of sorrow; may purchase the gorgeous cemetery; rear the stately monument; and employ the poet's eulogy and the artist's chisel; but the wicked shall be "forgotten in the city where it was so done." God will have them to be forgotten; and who shall perpetuate their memory? God will have the names of his faithful servants to be held in esteem; "the Lord is their memorial;" and who shall cause them to be forgotten? "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." "The memory of the just is blessed." "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

Mrs. Peet survives her husband to bless their surviving children. They are four in number;—two sons, Mr. Edward Josiah Peet, with a family in Norridgewock, and Mr. William Henry Peet, of New-York: and two daughters—Sarah Herrick, the wife of Mr. George Sawtelle, of Norridgewock, and Mary Herrick, married, since the death of her father, to Rev. Solomon E. Bixby, of Kenduskeag.

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthron'd and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The child of parents passed into the skies."

Extracts are given from a few among the many letters of condolence addressed to the family.

FROM MRS. M——, OF PORTLAND.

PORTLAND, *March 2d*, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. PEET:

I have been meaning ever since I heard of the death of my beloved friend—my father in Christ, to write to you; but I have shrunk from intruding upon your grief; and yet I am not willing that these days of sorrow should pass by without assuring you of my sympathy. In one sense I can truly sympathize with you—that of watching with painful interest the progress and termination of the same dreadful disease—a disease which, I think, you will agree with me in saying is, of all diseases with which we are acquainted, the most trying. It would seem to be of little consequence, when all is over, what means our ever kind Father takes to remove His servants to himself; yet we do so shrink from witnessing suffering in those we love! It is one of those dark lessons which we may be permitted to understand in the light of heaven. I cannot realize that I shall never see his dear face again in the flesh; but I pray that I may be fitted to meet him, through the merits of our common Saviour, in the mansions above.

I can think how lonely you must all be, and how deserted every part of your house must seem to you;—how Sarah must miss his ever affectionate attentions, when she goes home with the children. Oh! how painful is the void! May God, in his great mercy and pitying love, comfort you all in this hour of sorrow, and lay open to you those special comforts, which, in your case, seem so to abound.

I remember with much pleasure the interview I had with him last summer, when, though feeble, he seemed so cheerful and so hopeful; and the little call you made me with him, in September;

and which then, I hardly thought, would be the last I should ever receive from him. His affectionate manner I shall never forget. Pleasant was it to me in my childhood, and doubly pleasant has it seemed to me, whenever I have met him, in maturer years. I often wished, after he was taken sick, that I could once more take his hand and assure him of my love. I do indeed feel most deeply for you all.

With much love to George and Sarah, Edward—his wife and Mary,

I am yours truly and affectionately.

FROM REV. S. W. FIELD, PROVIDENCE.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., *March* 10, 1852.
34 Chestnut Street.

MY DEAR MRS. PEET AND FAMILY:

I received last week from Mr. Sawtelle, a paper containing the sad intelligence of your heavy bereavement. Be assured you have my tenderest sympathy; and I would fain attempt to administer consolation, but I need it myself, for I have lost in the one you mourn, a father. When I remember how much there has been in his life to comfort you, and I have no doubt, in his death also; when memory, busy with the past, gathers up all those excellencies that adorned his meek and heavenly character as a minister, a husband, a father, I feel that you cannot be wanting in consolation the most delightful from the object of your grief; and then that higher source, from which the dear departed so often drew his consolations, and from which he taught you to expect comfort—that is now open to you in a peculiar manner; and in the widow's God and the Father of the fatherless you will, I trust, find a sweetness and surety of comfort never before realized. A little while ago, but since his death, I had amost pleasant dream of going to see him. It left an impression on my mind that remained several days. Oh, I can see his pleasant face now—no human face ever affected me like his; no man did I ever love as I did him. Though twenty-two years have passed away, how fresh is that scene, when on one quiet Sabbath evening at sunset, he took me by the hand, his face all beaming with love for my soul, and talked to me of the importance of its salvation;

and for ever won my heart towards himself and I trust to God. Never, dear Mrs. Peet, shall I cease to cherish his memory—to love him, even though he has gone to heaven—yea, to love him *there* and spend Eternity with him in praising God.

I feel very thankful that I was permitted to visit him last summer; and I should have felt it a great privilege to have been with you when he died, to behold the scene of the "good man" going to his reward. I imagine it was like the following:

"I looked upon the righteous man,
And saw his parting breath,
Without a struggle or a sigh,
Serenely yield to death:
There was no anguish on his brow,
Nor terror in his eye:
The spoiler aimed a fatal dart,
But lost the victory.
I looked upon the righteous man,
And heard the holy prayer
Which rose above that breathless form,
To soothe the mourner's care,
And felt how precious was the gift
He to his loved ones gave—
The stainless memory of the just,
The wealth beyond the grave."

My dear Mrs. Peet, I know I can but little imagine, and not at all realize the desolateness and loneliness of your state; but I pray God, you may be sustained under it all; and that the thought of the eternal *gain* of your departed husband may reconcile you to your loss. Only think, he is in heaven! He is with Paul, Luther, and a host of holy men whom he once knew on earth. And, he is with Christ! This is what he often longed for—"to be with Christ, which is far better." And you shall go to him! Does not this cheer you? I know it does. And that will not be long. My own heart, grieved as it is, that I shall see him no more here, leaps with delight at the prospect of meeting him in heaven.

"Dear as thou wert, and justly dear,
We will not weep for thee."

No. "Blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord." We will prepare to follow him. Again would I tender my warmest sympathy to yourself and each of your children. May God bless you all; and whenever your feelings will admit of it, I should like to hear the particulars of our dear father's death.

We are all well. My wife unites with me in love and sympathy for you all. I have promised my children to tell them a story about your husband—you can well imagine what it will be.

Most affectionately

Yours,

FROM REV. JOHN PERHAM.

WINDHAM, *Feb.* 23, 1852.

DEAR FRIEND:

I received the sad, though not unexpected, intelligence of the death of your beloved father, on Saturday last, the day of his burial, in a letter from Bro. Hathaway. It would have afforded me much pleasure, to have attended his funeral and mingled my sympathies with those of the relatives and other friends, who committed the remains of one so universally beloved to the dust. You may assure your friends of the deep sympathy of myself and Mrs. P., in this time of bereavement and mourning. Your father, from my first acquaintance with him, ever proved himself a true friend and wise counsellor. Nothing ever transpired to interrupt our most cordial and fraternal intercourse. The death of no man in Somerset County, could have occasioned greater lamentation among the friends of religion and good order. But alas! "The godly man ceaseth, and the mourners go about the streets." No traits of goodness, no capacities for usefulness can avail to keep back the stroke of death, or prevent the execution of the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." His labors were arduous, incessant, and long continued. Probably, no minister of his age, ever devoted more hours of hard service to the cause of his divine Master; nor did he labor in vain. The fruits of his ministry may be found in all the region, and some of them, having ripened and been gathered, he has found in heaven; others in greater abundance will follow him, to add new lustre to his crown of glory.

A few years, and how many, to whom his voice has administered the instructions and consolations of the gospel, will be with him; and among the number, will not his companion, who has shared so long and so largely in his trials and joys—and his children, baptized by his hands and consecrated by his blessing, protected by his watchfulness, nurtured by his care, and converted in answer to his prayers, be found.

In the midst of gloom which overspreads your habitation, so recently fitted up for his comfort in declining age, your beautiful sanctuary, in which his voice gave utterance to so much truth, and to so many fervent supplications for the people whom he ardently loved, and the whole community for whose welfare he felt and labored so much; I say, that in the midst of all this gloom, there is room for holy submission and consolation. Your father lived to perform, all that could be reasonably expected of a husband and father and minister; he came to his end, after his work was done, and *well* done, and before the imbecility of dotage began to appear. He had sufficient warning of his approaching dissolution. He had time to arrange all his affairs, and to gird up his loins for the last conflict. His end was peace. He died among his friends; and he is buried where you would have his remains rest—in an inclosure which contains so many sacred treasures, and is hallowed by so many pleasing, yet melancholy associations. Can you not feel that God has been signally kind in all this? Wherein would you have it otherwise?

It now remains for the children to be as the *father*—for them to imitate his virtues, and prepare for a like happy and timely departure; and for his people to treasure up his instructions, maintain and perpetuate the institutions which found in him such a firm friend and supporter, and to stand with their "lamps trimmed and burning," in readiness for the coming of the Lord.

Say to your mother, that Mrs. P. and myself deeply feel for her, having both tasted of the cup which her Heavenly Father has given her to drink. We shall pray, that she may have grace to sustain her to the close of her pilgrimage; and friends to solace her in her loneliness—to assuage her grief, and minister to her wants; and that she may come to her end in peace.

Accept our best wishes for all the family.

Your sincere and faithful friend.

FROM REV. ISAAC ROGERS.

FARMINGTON, *Feb.* 21, 1852.

AFFLICTED SISTER:

The letter from your son, Edward, containing the not unexpected but sad tidings of your sore bereavement, in the death of your kind and long loved husband, did not reach us till last evening. Consequently, it was too late for us to get ready and come over, in any season to attend the funeral services. This is to us a great disappointment, and quite an affliction, we do assure you. For we have so long known, and so greatly loved the departed husband and father, and venerated brother in the pastoral office, that ever since we heard of the attack upon him, which has closed his days on the earth, we had purposed to see either him or you, before, or after, his death should take place. If the letter had only reached here the night previous, or even at noon of yesterday, we should have been with you, to mingle our sympathy and condolence with the afflicted and bereaved, and to testify our respect and affection for him, who indeed "Is not dead, but sleepeth." For our, and your loss, great though it be, is his unspeakable and everlasting gain. He had finished his course, and kept the faith; henceforth there is the crown of rejoicing placed upon his head, which will be increasingly radiant forever and ever.

In the midst of this affliction, also, you, and the dear family, have many other topics of consolation and support. God, your heavenly Father, your kindest, greatest, and best friend, has done it. He has done it, too, in as good a time, and as gentle a manner, perhaps, as you could naturally expect. Your husband and father was, at the time of his death, the oldest *pastor* in the State of Maine, of our denomination; and the thirty and eight years of his pastoral life had been not only blamelessly and virtuously occupied by him, but he had by his diligence, fidelity and success in this office, and as a missionary of the cross in all the region round about, purchased to himself an excellent reputation, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, enduring the cross, despising the shame; thus making full proof of his ministry, and clearly showing that he was called of God, as was Aaron. Then too, the peaceful and harmonious state of the church, and the good prospects of the church and society, as he has been called to leave

them, are such as to lead to the confident hope, that he has well laid the foundations of many generations, and that on earth, as well as in heaven, his name will be in everlasting remembrance. Coming to his grave, too, naturally, in a good age, as a shock of corn that is ripe in its season, you cannot of course, mourn for him, but for yourselves, that you have lost so affectionate a husband and father. But yet, how kind has God been to spare him to you so long, and to render the relation so pleasant and useful, for so many years. Jehovah says, "Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me."

Much love from Mrs. R. and myself to you all, on this occasion, and in these circumstances—to Edward and his wife, to William, if at home; whom we so greatly love, that he had the disposition, as well as ability, to smooth the dying pillow of his father, and to cheer his last days, as he did. May his father's God, be his God, now and evermore. Also to Mr. Sawtelle and Sarah, with their family. May this stroke be the means of their present and everlasting good. And may Mary be excited to a new and more entire consecration of herself to the service of God, as the future companion of one of his servants in the ministry.

Though absent in body, we are with you, to-day, in spirit; rejoicing that the skies are so propitious, and praying that all the exercises of the occasion may be owned and blessed of God, to the saving good of all, and that, however great the good your beloved husband and honored father accomplished by his life, he may accomplish still more, by his sickness and death. Soon, too, our turn will come; "Death at the farthest, can't be far" from any of us; especially from those of us, that already have gray hairs, here and there, upon us. Let us be "Also ready, for in such an hour as we think not, the son of man cometh." Let us therefore stand with our loins girt about with truth, and our lamps trimmed and burning.

Yours in the love of Christ.

FROM REV. THOMAS ADAMS.

THOMPSON, OHIO, *March* 8, 1852.

MY DEAR MRS. PEET:

A letter from a friend at Vassalborough, received four days since, informed me of the death of your dear husband. I had

been previously informed of his critical state, and a letter received to-day, from my beloved brother Thurston, now at Vassalborough, has given me additional particulars.

I can hardly think it necessary to address to you words of consolation. You know the Source, and are familiar with those topics which suggest the appropriate considerations; and when you review the past, and contrast your experience, in your connection with your beloved husband with that of many others, you will doubtless feel that you have occasion to speak of the *goodness* much more than of the *severity* of God. You have known, all along, that the tie must be severed. No strange or *unexpected* thing has happened. I can hardly realize, yet such is the fact, that he had more than completed his three score years and ten. You look forward to a speedy reunion, where toils and trials will have no place, where ties will no more be severed.

But while you will not murmur, you do yet *deeply feel* the stroke that has fallen upon you. I cannot repress the impulse I feel to tender you my heartfelt sympathy. You sorrow not alone. From the time that I first entered your dwelling, on a very cold winter evening, in the winter of 1817–18, I numbered your husband among my *particular* friends. I call to mind the many, *many* pleasant hours I have spent beneath your roof, as well as the many seasons when I have enjoyed his society at my own hearth-stone. Those were happy days, but they have fled, and we must now look upward, to that blessed abode, where there are still purer joys, and more hallowed friendships. But there was a peculiar interest, and I *believe* it was mutual; a close, truly brotherly affection, that prevailed among the original members of the Kennebec and Somerset Association; such, I am sure as *I* have not felt in any subsequent organizations, though I think of many more recent, to which I feel warmly attached. Our meetings were looked forward to with interest, and I now look back to them as brightly cheering spots along the pathway of life. Providence has kindly spared us, far beyond what we had a right to hope. Brother Holt was taken away in the midst of his days, Dr. Gillet, like a shock of corn fully ripe; your husband at full maturity. I am the youngest of the survivors, but three score years are upon me.

You do not need that I speak of the good qualities of your husband. The unfaltering love and confidence of his people for near forty years, is the most honorable human testimony, and the highest eulogium, that he can receive.

I have occasionally heard from you, through friends. You will reckon it among not the least of your mercies, that God has blessed you with children, able and disposed to cheer you, in the evening of your days, by their filial attention.

Mrs. Adams cherishes an affectionate remembrance of you, and your lamented husband.

"Cast thy burdens on the Lord, and he will sustain thee."

Very sincerely your friend.

FROM REV. DAVID THURSTON.

BROWN'S CORNER, *March* 1, 1852.

MRS. PEET:

My dear respected friend. I desire most sincerely to condole with you in your afflicted state. But there are so many, very many sweet ingredients in the bitter cup, which our Heavenly Father has given you to drink, that you may well "sing of mercy as well as of judgment." What reason for gratitude, that you have had such a husband, that your children have had such a father, that the church has had such a pastor, that Norridgewock has had such a citizen, and the world such an inhabitant; one who, in all these relations, has exerted such a pure, good, and salutary influence, and that he has been spared so long. "He is unto God a sweet savor of Christ." True, the more desirable and valuable was his longer continuance, the greater is the loss sustained by his removal. To us it appears mysterious that such influences, which are so much needed in this world, should be taken away to another world, where to our limited understanding, such influences are so much less needed, if needed at all. How profoundly ignorant we are! How true, that "we know only in part." How delightful the anticipation, that in the light of eternity, we may be able to read those dark passages in the book of God's providence, the print of which is now so small that they are quite illegible. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Blessed promise. It will be fulfilled in due time. What an invaluable

legacy, you and your dear children have in the instructions, example and prayers of that estimable, beloved man, who performed so well the duties of those endearing relations, which he sustained. The gems of Golconda and the gold of California are not to be compared with it. Surely then your hearts, instead of repining, will overflow with gratitude for the priceless blessings of a friend, who has passed his three score years and ten in a way so creditable to himself, so useful to his fellow men, and so honorable to the grace of God.

I have lost one for whom I had long cherished a very cordial affection, with whom I had been tenderly and profitably associated. I cannot well express the regret I felt on receiving your son's letter, announcing the death of his beloved father, and inviting me to be present at his funeral, as it was too late. The letter was not received till 9 o'clock in the morning of the day of the funeral. I was grieved; but I desired to be still, knowing that infinite wisdom and goodness had thus ordered it. But I trust you had the presence and sympathy of "Him, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

My regard to my dear departed Brother and his bereaved family, prompts me to proffer my services for one Sabbath, to the smitten church and people, if they would be acceptable. The Sabbath which would best suit my convenience to spend at Norridgwock, will be, *Deo volente*, the 3d in this month, the 21st inst. Please inform me, whether that day would meet the wishes of the church and society, that I may make my arrangements accordingly. As I am supplying in three places, as early a reply to my proposal as convenient, will oblige me. Since receiving Edward's letter I have been absent most of the time, or I should before this have addressed you.

Mrs. Thurston, who continues to be a great sufferer, *mentally*, unites in love and sympathy to you and your children.

Very truly your affectionate and sympathizing
Friend, in haste.

CHAPTER VII.

HIS CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE.

SELDOM do we love a man for the results of his life, and not have occasion to love him, even more, for what he is. The works of God are marvellous, sought out of all that have pleasure in them; but the attributes of the divine character, still more than divine works, are matter for our admiring wonder. And so man effects nothing in his life which he is not fitted to accomplish. Having followed Mr. Peet through the various scenes and labors of his life, it is proposed, in this chapter, to consider how the God of nature, Providence, and grace, fitted him for usefulness. The work of God for him, and in him, preceded, and accompanied, and originated the work of God through him.

His *physical power for the endurance of hard service* may be of sufficient importance to deserve to be mentioned. He inherited by birth a constitution of great strength; and the circumstances of his early

life were such as not to enervate and deprive him of the inheritance, but secure to him long the valuable and necessary possession. He was not born in affluence, nor bred in luxury and ease. The son of hard-working parents, he was himself, till he arrived at the years of his majority, a hard-working farmer, amid the hills of Vermont. He was accustomed, sometimes, to lament, that his youth was spent in seclusion from books, and in divorcement from almost all literary privileges; and he would, doubtless, in some desirable respects, have been more distinguished than he was, if the fact had been otherwise. Literature, to impart its best graces and its finest polish, seeks an introduction to the mind, while it is yet young and flexible. She is hard to be won, and slow in dispensing her favors, when sought after by late votaries. But if there was loss in one direction, there was gain in another; which, it may be, was a full equivalent. As it was, he could, and did, as very few can, apply himself to his work eighteen or twenty hours out of the twenty-four, as a rather uniform habit; he could endure fatigues and exposures which a hot-house plant cannot endure; and after all the wear to which he had been subjected, and notwithstanding his advanced age, and the debility occasioned by frequent attacks of acute disease; at the last, all his friends had occasion to be

surprised at the vigor with which his system resisted attacks upon it, and the tenacity of the vital principle. Without physical vigor he might have been useful in some stations; but he could not have performed the work which has been effected through his instrumentality.

It should be stated that while he undeniably did possess a vigorous constitution, the fact was not early apparent to himself nor to others. On the contrary, till by enduring, his power for endurance was demonstrated; as he was often ill, he was considered rather more than usually frail; and he anticipated for himself, habitually, but a short period of earthly service. This, too, may have been favorable; as it undoubtedly had its influence in leading him to live as in view of an opening eternity, and to look on all about him as beings whom he was soon to meet in another world.

In the *time and circumstances of his theological training*, he was favored. It may well be doubted whether students in a course of preparation for the ministry, at any period, in our country, have been, while pursuing their studies, more desirably situated than were the members of the first formed classes in the Theological Seminary at Andover. Much more than has of late years been the fact in this institution, or in other similar ones, their condition resem-

bled that of students resorting to the old domestic method of training; while they enjoyed advantages, some of which are incompatible with that method. As was natural, the sympathies of the churches were unusually gathered about the then infant institution, established to supply them with spiritual teachers; and their prayers for it were abundant. The instructors, Woods, Griffin and Stuart, while they were princes among preachers, had, each, the advantages attendant upon large experience in the practical discharge of the duties of the ministry, having recently come from their parishes; where they had been blessed with revivals of religion, and been permitted to move amid the displays of the divine power and mercy in the bringing of sinners to repentance. The spirit of missions, also, was then developing itself in its freshness, and with a before unwonted prominence, giving expansion to spiritual views and aims, and adding fervor to devotion. The students, also, were then less secluded from society than is now the custom. They mingled freely with the people of the town and in the vicinity, and became practically acquainted with men of differing character, "with scenes of affliction, and scenes of joy; with sickness and with death; with weekly meetings for prayer and instruction among the people, and with the various dealings of God's spirit with the

souls of men." In short, if education for the ministry was somewhat less literary, and less ornate, than we now have; it may be that it was equally fitted to awaken thought, to exercise the powers of the mind, and produce thorough and earnest theologians; that it guarded better against dangers from a spirit of pride and worldly ambition; and was more sure to supply the churches with pastors, and the world with evangelists, such as are, at all times, needed, men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

Mr. Peet, when he entered upon the public duties of the ministry, was indeed mature in years; and before going to Andover he had been considerably conversant with scenes and duties, such as were before him in his ministerial life. But the influences brought to bear upon him while in the Seminary were undoubtedly very desirable in character. In his early labors in Vermont, in scenes unusual and exciting, he seemed to be unruffled and at home. In the revival at Norridgewock, which preceded his ordination, he seemed not a novice, but a man of wisdom and experience. His early labors there, and as a missionary, were performed in more critical circumstances, and demanded wisdom, perhaps, more than was requisite at any subsequent period; and

from the beginning he moved quietly and humbly, and yet as a master. Probably, in no single exercise, or instance, in his ministry, did any one think of him, as inept; much less, as a young man puffed up and wanting in an experienced, subdued and chastened mind.

The agency of a wise Providence was doubtless concerned in conducting him to the particular *scene of his public life, and field* of his ministerial labors. Useful, we may readily believe, he might and would have been any where, in the Lord's vineyard; but it is possible, that nowhere else the fruits of his work would have equally abounded. A people less intelligent, than those of Norridgewock, might not so readily have appreciated the value of his qualities as a minister, which were not of a particularly glittering and dazzling character; while, on the other hand, a people more numerous, and more opulent, might have been tempted to desire a ministry more captivating to the fancy and more flattering to pride; though it should be less spiritual, less edifying to the flock of God, and far less suited to reclaim and save the wanderers. He was well fitted for missionary labor, conducted in the manner in which he performed it; while, had he been called to a wholly itinerant service, it is difficult to perceive how, constituted as he was, he could have been very happy, or eminently

useful. God designed him for Norridgewock, and he placed him there; designed that he should be a great blessing to Zion in the county of Somerset, and planted him in that territory, thereby preparing the way for existing churches to be saved from extinction, and for others, which then had no being, to spring into existence. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps."

A man is very much influenced by his domestic relations. "Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." And Mr. Peet was blessed in his *marriage*. Circumstances render an expansion of statement, on this topic, at present, improper. It may however involve no breach of the laws of discretion, to say, that as he was naturally disposed to despondence, it was evidently of great importance to him to be brought into close proximity with such as combined, in their character, tenderness of heart, together with a good measure of buoyancy of spirit and energy of resolution. And it is matter for pleasing and thankful reflection, that in consequence of an encouraging and cheering influence exerted on him at home, there is good reason to think, that several years were added to the length of his ministry; and that in this way his life, even, was considerably prolonged beyond what it would else have been.

Mr. Peet's *intellectual constitution* was good. The imagination did not predominate. He discriminated well, and his judgment was sure. In writing and speaking it might have been better, had he been less timid in permitting himself to soar; and yet he often did give free play to his emotional nature, and move away easily and gracefully, carried by the impulses of excited affection. This is certain, he never exhibited complacency in a vapid performance of his own; and he never attempted any thing to which he was not fully competent. He instinctively shrank from whatever is an approach to personal display; and he habitually cherished depressed views of his own powers. In reality, the operations of his mind were not deficient in order, in clearness or in strength. Its products, if not brilliant, were rich. If a subject did not expand itself, in its various parts and relations, as readily to his mind, as to that of some others, he never mistook a crude and partial, for a mature and full view of it; and he had, in an unusual degree, the power and habit of prolonged attention. He was remarkable for a nice and ready perception of the proprieties of time and place and circumstances. With uncommon ease he could read personal character from its casual manifestations. None, who were much in his way, certainly, during his ministerial life, failed to find that

he possessed, beyond the ordinary degree, the power to influence other minds. Some at least there have been, to whom, as a critic, though they were perfectly assured of the friendliness of his feelings, and notwithstanding all their efforts to overcome it, he has inevitably been a greater terror, than the whole of a learned and august Faculty at a College or Theological Seminary.

The passive virtues are preeminently inculcated by our Lord; and in this age of noise and display, wherever they appear, they are singularly valuable. Mr. Peet's *unaffected modesty* imparted a charm to his character and life; and undoubtedly increased the amount of his usefulness. His modesty did not consist in undervaluing, much less, in verbally disparaging, his own character and attainments. Nor was it inconsistent with decision in opinions, and fearlessness and earnestness in the expression of them. Modesty was undoubtedly a natural trait of his mind, and a sweet ornament of his character. But he exhibited it chiefly as a moral and Christian virtue, growing out of a sense of absolute dependence, a quickened sensibility to his own personal and infinite indebtedness to grace; his habit of intimate converse with the Bible, so suited to bring down the loftly looks of man; and above all, his habit, as an erring child of the dust, of drawing nigh in prayer,

to the pure, High and Holy One. His modesty was but "humility looking out at the eyes, beaming in the countenance, and spreading itself over the whole deportment."

Under the influence of this attribute of his character, his sermons were always an exhibition of the pure and unmixed gospel. He had little temptation to introduce new and doubtful theories, however plausible; he could not darken and pervert the Scriptures, nor leave plain and everlasting truth of infinite importance, and substitute novelties, to draw to himself the applauses of men.

> "Leaving the wits the spacious air,
> With license to build castles there."

His modesty gave him an advantage over adversaries. Its influence, on the effect of his preaching, is significantly illustrated in the statement of Dr. Cummings, given in a preceding chapter, respecting the impression produced by his first sermon. A modest spirit and manner most betoken conviction in the mind of the speaker; and, after all, are best adapted to beget conviction in the mind of the hearer. Prejudices that would be but confirmed by arrogance and dogmatism, may fly before the preacher who is humble before God, and who yields a due deference to the understanding of his hearers. The

ancient father said, in reply to the question, "What is the first thing in religion? Humility. What is the second? Humility. What is the third? Humility."

He was remarkable for *the habit of diligence.* It has already appeared, that in the earlier period of his ministry, he preached usually from four to five times in the week, and attended besides, perhaps, two thirds as many other public or social religious meetings; and also that he visited much from house to house. To this last service he attached great importance; and it was with him a service of labor, and not a resort for squandering time.

He has left a curious book, in quarto form, written in his neat and legible style, containing a record of all his public services, as a minister, from the time he received license to preach, till June of the year of his death. In this may be seen exhibited, in the briefest compass possible, how many times, and where, he preached on every Sabbath, or other day, of his ministerial life; when and where he administered the ordinances, Baptism or the Lord's Supper, solemnized a marriage, attended a funeral, or conducted a prayer meeting, conference, or other religious service. He did not himself record the sum of his various services; nor has any one, since his death, so attempted to arrive at results, as to justify

a public statement of them; but every page is heavy in the footing, and impresses one with the fact, that, in public labors, his life was a race.

He attended about five hundred funerals; united one hundred and eighty-eight couple in the covenant of marriage; and had a seat in fifty-three ecclesiastical councils. Always watchful and tender of the female members of his family, he was, when at home, very attentive to household duties,—himself performing many services, which in ministers' families, if not in others, are apt to devolve upon them. He was the first to rise and the last to retire. But no statements of this sort can impart any just views of his actual industry. His intellectual diligence was fully equal to that in labors without; while his spiritual diligence was still more signal. Few men, probably, have lived, more entirely filling up time with useful employment, than he did. It was ever the wonder of his friends, who knew his habits, how it was possible for his physical nature to be sustained, while he gave but from four to six hours to sleep, and was so laboriously employed during all his wakeful hours. His mind inclined him to system and order in his employments; and he observed as much of method in them, as, in his circumstances, was possible. While his diligence was prompt, leading him to defer nothing till to-morrow which should

be done to-day; it was deliberate, having respect to the sentiment of the proverb: "The more haste, the worse speed." Industry characterized him till quite his last days, proving that,

> "Every disease of age we may prevent,
> Like those of youth, by being diligent."

The Rev. Fifield Holt, of Bloomfield, his ministerial brother and neighbor, who was much with him in his excursions from home, used to say: "I have often passed nights in the same room with Mr. Peet; but that I have slept with him, I cannot affirm; for he is always up when I fall asleep, and always up when I awake."

His *pure example* was an essential element of his power, and means of his usefulness. If he had known faults, they who know, need not be told of them; while it is not apparent, how the mention of them would be suited to profit such as are ignorant. Still, there is no indisposition to name faults; provided it could be made apparent, that they did really appertain to him. And it may be said: "There is no man that sinneth not;" and he was a man. And it may be added, that judging from his private record, on no day, for fifty years, sick or well, did he fail to spend portions of it in mourning over his corruptions; and few were the days when it was not with

many tears. He was doubtless in example, as in heart, at an immeasurable distance from his perfect Saviour. Still it is certain that his example was apparently disfigured by no faults of a glaring character. He was not the slave of any habit of sensuality; he was not loose in habits as to the observance of the Sabbath; he was not dishonest, nor regardless of his word, nor prone to exaggeration of statement, nor addicted to levity. He indulged not in the glitter of worldly fashion and pride, sought not earthly riches, and coveted not the objects of a worldly ambition. And, while he repressed sinful indulgences, he exhibited the positive moral virtues of the gospel. Positively, he was sober, just, temperate. He was "an example to the believers in conversation, in faith, in purity." And in addition, he was kind, and gentle, and forbearing and ready to forgive. His heart was alive to the distresses of the suffering; he was ready to forego his own comfort or ease for the comfort of others. He wounded not, needlessly, the feelings of any, and aided not in stirring up bitter strife. He was far from harshness and coarseness in his intercourse with others. The young and happy did not see him frowning upon any of their innocent pleasures; the poor did not find him distant, nor the afflicted, unfeeling. He was envious of no man's rank, or talents, or honor.

The success of another gave him, not pain, but pleasure. He was glad if a brother had the good which he had not, or was free from the pain that afflicted him. He was not a suspicious friend. He was good-natured, and good-humored. Though not apt to be guilty of weak compliances, good nature seemed to qualify each thing he said or did; and made his reproofs, even, while effective, to be easily borne. He was courteous, in the best sense of the term, a gentleman. That such an example must have given untold weight to the gospel, which he preached, none, who are considerate, can fail to perceive.

He was remarkable for *attracting to himself the veneration and love of his fellow beings.* And what implies high praise, they ever loved him most, who knew him best.

The writer, a short time before Mr. Peet rested from his earthly labors, resided for a time in a family, the intelligent lady of which, when young and attending the Female Academy at Norridgewock, had her home at his house. Nothing else seemed more to disturb her, or would more surely call forth her indignant rebuke, than the remotest implication of imperfection in him in her presence; and no expressions of his worth, to which she listened, seemed to reach her views of his merits.

Another lady, who also had, when a girl at

school, resided with him, said, that when considering the question submitted to her, whether she would consent to be married, her chief objection was, that if married, she could no more attend the Academy, and board at Mr. Peet's.

It is believed, that he never had an inmate of his family, whether wife, child, servant or boarder, and few parishioners, who can now hear his name mentioned without awakened emotion. In the region where he was most known, the individual who should presume to speak disparagingly of him, would find himself scarcely tolerated.

The pastor of the church at Bloomfield lived, for many years, at his side, and in habits of the most unrestrained intimacy with him; and none could be a more competent witness.

For the sake of confirmation, and of further illustration of statements already made, at the expense, it may be, of some repetition, additional graphic paragraphs from his sermon at Mr. Peet's funeral, are, with his consent, transferred to these pages.

All who hear me, will bear me out in saying, that during the thirty-eight years of his residence and ministry in this place, he exhibited in a very uncommon degree, the characteristics of the "perfect" and "upright" man. He made indeed, no pretensions to freedom from sin. On the contrary he acknowledged himself a sinner, who if saved at all, must be saved by grace, through Christ. He confessed, and lamented, not only his past sins, the sins of his youth, but his daily liability to sin; and mourned that

he was not more fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And yet, such was his conscientious outward practical conformity to every known requirement of duty, towards God and man, as not only to furnish conclusive evidence to all who knew him well, that he did at times love God with supreme affection, and his neighbor as himself, but to furnish no evidence to many, if indeed it furnished evidence to any, that he ever felt in a different manner. He may have had even outward faults; but if he had any, either as a husband, or father, or brother, or neighbor, or friend, or minister of Christ, they were visible to but few persons, and to them only on close inspection, and intimate acquaintance. It is said there are spots even in the sun. But they are visible only to keen-sighted eyes, and to them only by the help of optical instruments. Nor was his comparative freedom from fault ascribable to exemption from trial. He knew what it was to be assailed by the envenomed shafts of slander's all-devouring tongue. And yet like Christ, who when reviled, reviled not again, he rendered not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing. He blessed them that cursed him; was ready to do good to them that hated him; and prayed for them that despitefully used him. He knew what it was to be burdened with pecuniary embarrassment and perplexity, and with multiplied bodily infirmities; but however heavily these burdens weighed upon him, though he may have been heard sometimes to sigh, like Job he sinned not with his lips, nor charged God foolishly. He knew what it was to be often overtasked with labor, that seemed to be beyond his physical strength, and yet he never refused, or seemed to hesitate, to increase his own burdens, for the relief of an overburdened brother. But inasmuch as it was in the relations of a minister of the gospel that he stood forth most prominently to view, it was in those relations that his character most brightly shone. As a pastor he was affectionate, affable, and familiar with all classes of his people; and yet never dropping a word that was calculated to impair confidence in him, or diminish respect and esteem for him, as a good minister of Jesus Christ; but on the contrary, habitually on the watch, to seize a passing opportunity to inculcate truth, and promote the edification or salvation of those in whose company he might be; like Paul becoming all things to all men, if by any means he might save some.

As a preacher, though not so brilliant, and fascinating as some others in the estimation of worldly-minded people, he was plain, faithful, sound, instructive, and edifying. No one could hear him, and go away, having any good reason to say, that the preacher's meaning had been unintelligible, or that he had been awed by the frowns, or seduced by the smiles, of opulence or power, to conceal offensive truth; or had preached unsound doctrine; or had not furnished solid food for thought; or that such preaching was not fitted to edify a candid hearer. The movements of his mind, though uncommonly strong, and sure, were not naturally rapid. But for this want of natural rapidity of thought he more than made up, by the unwearied, single-hearted, and prayerful diligence, with which he devoted himself to the studies and labors of his sacred calling. It is said to have been a common saying among stage-drivers, teamsters and others, whose business obliged them to pass his house, sometimes very early in the morning, and sometimes very late at night, that however early in the morning, they passed the house of Mr. Peet, or however late at night, they always saw a light in his study. For thirty years or more, it was his habit to rise at four o'clock in the morning, and not to retire to rest till twelve o'clock at night. And none of the intervening hours of the day were wasted in idleness or useless recreation. His first work in the morning, before any of the rest of his household had risen from their beds, and his last work at night, after the rest of the family had retired, uniformly was, to retire to his closet and give thanks and pray. Hundreds and hundreds of times have the low tones of his voice, while the senses of almost all others have been locked in slumber, been heard in his study, in earnest supplication, as we doubt not, for himself, his family, his friends, his enemies, when he had enemies, his church, his people, and the world. And the filling up of the day was such as might be naturally expected, from his habit of morning and nightly devotion. The calls of duty, secular and religious, as they succeeded each other, were promptly and faithfully obeyed. Nor did he labor in vain. As he took pains to furnish himself with beaten oil with which regularly to replenish the lamp of the sanctuary, it was a peculiar privilege to worship in the temple where he ministered at the altar. There was a richness of spirituality in his

prayers, and of evangelical truth in his sermons, which could not fail to feast the soul of the spiritual hearer. And from among the previously unconverted portion of those among whom he labored in the gospel, God gave him many souls as the seals of his ministry; how many, the light of eternity alone can fully reveal. His influence was of the silent kind; and to a great extent invisible, except by means of its effects, in the spiritual verdure and bloom, which generally adorned the fields of his labor. He did not, like the ancient Pharisees, sound a trumpet before him whenever he attempted any thing for the glory of God or the good of man; nor did he like Jehu call on all around him to come and see his zeal for the Lord. His object seemed to be the good which he tried to do, and not the credit of doing it. His doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled like the dew, which, though it may not be accompanied with any thunder or lightning to attract particular observation, makes glad the wilderness and solitary place, and causes the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

His influence in Norridgewock, is seen not only in the difference between what Norridgewock now is, in respect to social harmony, and order, and happiness, and morals, and religion, and what Norridgewock was in these respects when he first took up his abode in the town, a difference traceable in no small degree to his influence, as its instrumental cause, but in the training for heaven, which his ministry gave to those whom he found here already enlisted on the side of religion, and nearly all of whom have since finished their earthly pilgrimage, and been till recently waiting to welcome him home to his and their Heavenly Father's house,—and in the many whom his ministry has added to their number, and led along by his sound instructions and faithful counsels till many of them, also, have finished their course, while others still survive, to hold his name in affectionate remembrance as long as they live, and to hand it down to their children, and their children's children. But Norridgewock, although it has been, especially for the last twenty years, the chief field of his labors and usefulness, has been, by no means, the only one.

During the first eighteen years of his residence here, he was not only the Pastor of this church, but also at the same time a

missionary in the then destitute region around. Nor were his labors in this capacity marked with less noticeable saving results, than attended his ministry here. In New Sharon, Mercer, Madison, Solon, Bingham, and other places where he labored as a missionary, permanent evidence was visible, in souls truly converted, as their subsequent lives have shown, and in some of these places, evidence in churches established by his instrumentality on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, that the Lord was with him, and blessed him, and made him a blessing to those to whom he preached the Gospel.

Wherever he went he left a savor of godliness behind him, by his conversation, which though it had nothing in it like sanctimony or cant, was always such as became a minister of Christ; and by the Bibles, and Tracts, and other good books which he distributed among the people. But his ministerial labors are now over; although the beneficial effects of them will doubtless continue on earth as long as the world shall stand, and in Heaven, for ever.

The following letter from the Rev. Dr. Tappan, of Augusta, obligingly sent to the editor, is inserted in this place:

AUGUSTA, *April* 15, 1853.

REV. DAVID SHEPLEY,

MY DEAR SIR:—I rejoice to learn that the work of preparing a memoir of our late excellent friend, the Rev. Josiah Peet, has fallen into your hands. Having been with him for several years, as a son with a father, you have better opportunities than any person out of the family circle, of knowing the man; and hence you will be able to give, in addition to those things which were read and known of all men, such minute traits of character and incidents of private life as are always needful to an accurate and complete portraiture.

My first acquaintance with Mr. Peet was at the time of his ordination in July, 1814. In February, 1816, a "Ministerial Conference" was formed, which, three years afterward, was merged in the "Kennebec and Somerset Association." At the meetings

of these bodies, of which we both were members, until the division of the Association in May, 1829, we often met, and occasionally at other times. The more I knew of Mr. Peet, the more highly I esteemed him. If he did not awaken admiration by the coruscations of his genius, the extent of his learning, or the profoundness of his intellectual researches, you could not but respect and confide in him, as a man of good sense, consummate prudence, unquestionable integrity, sound theological views, and devoted piety. The movements of his mind were not rapid; but they seldom failed of leading to correct results. Few are the men in the ministry, or out of it, who more uniformly sustain the character of persons "blameless, and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, who shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of truth." While he held fast the distinguishing doctrines of the puritan faith, and was from principle strongly attached to the creed and the polity of his own denomination, many ministers and Christians of other evangelical churches had occasion to know, that his heart was large enough to love them and pray for their prosperity. He was given to hospitality; and not a few have felt since his departure, that a sad breach was made in the circle of those, whose friendly greeting, and whose uniformly kind, obliging deportment, in their own dwellings, make you feel that you are at home.

In these days of change, it is delightful to contemplate one good minister of Jesus Christ, sustaining many years the pastoral relations in one place, until he dies, and is buried among his own people, embalmed by their tears, and long to be remembered by them with an affection, like that of children for a venerated and beloved father. The history of Mr. Peet furnishes a very striking instance of the strong hold that a Christian minister may obtain upon the love and respect of a whole community, without those showy qualities that constitute "a smart preacher," or "a very talented man," by the uniform exhibition of an amiable Christian spirit, and the assiduous, faithful discharge of pastoral duties.

It was a signal benefit to the County of Somerset, that Mr. Peet, of Norridgewock, and Mr. Holt, of Bloomfield, *par nobile fratrum*, for several years after their settlement, spent a portion of their time as missionaries. During the most of this period

they were the only Congregational ministers in that part of the State: and their services were of great value to many other churches, besides those of which they were pastors, and to a numerous though scattered population, which would otherwise have been as sheep, almost, without a shepherd.

In the desire and expectation that your forthcoming memoir may be an interesting and useful addition to that very valuable class of books which gives us the life and character of good men,

I remain, dear sir,

Very cordially yours,

BENJAMIN TAPPAN.

In his public *prayers* Mr. Peet was remarkably rich and impressive. This is true of his prayers in his family, and on all social occasions. In the prayer preceding the sermon in public worship, a spirit was breathed, and an influence exerted, in connection with which, the assembly seldom failed to be brought into a frame favorable to a profitable reception of the truth.

His influence tended, more than that of most ministers, to bring to pass that which God commands shall be, and which there are reasons the most weighty for desiring should be:—"My house shall be called the house of prayer." The house in which he conducted the worship was thought of by those who were worshippers in it, as a house of prayer. It was in fact such; and however others might be indifferent, they, who felt themselves to be guilty and pressed with wants, eagerly resorted to it; that they might be aided in unburdening their souls to

Him who listens to the pleadings of those who love Him, receiving their requests for themselves, and their intercessions for a whole needy world.

His *sermons*, with some exceptions, were not, in a literary point of view, highly finished and polished productions; but in them truth was elaborated with clearness and strength; and they were rich in evangelical sentiment and solid instruction. His texts were generally felicitous, simple, free from an affectation of singularity, and fairly expressing, in their unperverted meaning, the subjects of the discourses drawn from them. He almost always explained his text, carefully stating, when necessary, its relation to the context.

As his aim was to glorify God, and save men, the peculiar truths and duties of the Gospel constituted the topics of his sermons. Few preachers, better than he, conformed to the precept of Archbishop Usher: "Insist most on those points that tend to produce sound belief, sincere love to God, repentance for sin, and a life of holiness." He did not so far forget that he was an ambassador of Christ, and so far wrest the pulpit from its legitimate use, as to descant in the presence of those who heard him on topics simply pretty or amusing. And yet he was among the last to be complained of, as preaching month after month on a single subject, or on a con-

tracted circle of subjects. On the contrary, there was a rich variety in his preaching, growing out of the endless variety in shape with which truth is presented in the Scriptures, and corresponding with diversity in the course of events, and in the condition of those who looked to him for instruction. And as he was not monotonous in his choice of subjects, neither was he in his methods of treating them. While ever simple and grave, he had no stereotyped method of constructing his discourses. His example proves that a preacher, who is studious and devout, for the sake of variety, need not render the pulpit secular, and "sink his ministrations to the rank of a dramatic exhibition."

He kept his mind wakeful, his conscience tender and his heart warm. He loved his books, especially his Bible; and he loved his study. Having more than most, to interrupt and prevent studious habits, he abounded in study, uniting with it abounding prayer. And he appeared before his people "a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," and brought "forth out of his treasure things new and old." His auditors heard no mere declamation, and saw no display of artificial animation. With some minor infelicities in utterance to be excused, they saw one speaking with such an honest mind—with such feeling and solemnity in his tone and manner,

as showed that he feared God, and had received "an anointing of the Holy One;" and almost irresistibly created the impression that God was speaking by one of his servants. They saw one who evidently dared keep back no part of God's counsel, withhold nothing that is profitable. They heard plain exhibitions, now of delightful, and again, of awful truths. They heard not an abundance of terrific phraseology, yet warnings full of terror in their import, and persuasions of weight, accompanied always with feeling, and occasionally with tears, that could not be restrained. It was not the preacher's fault if they were not instructed, convicted of the truth, and savingly profited.

If occasion required, he knew how to accomplish much by a single discourse. Did circumstances call for the elucidation and defence of a particular doctrine of the Gospel, he was equal to the emergency; and after he had treated and presented it, there was seldom cause to desire much more. Or if some duty required special attention, he could present that in its proper light, and with its strong enforcements; so that a continued disregard of it became difficult. Many of his people will not soon forget the sermon in which he called upon them to repair their house of worship. The questions have been asked by an educated man, who often heard him: "When did

he preach a poor sermon? When did he offer a cold and formal prayer? Or when give such an exhortation?"

His preaching, in general, was effective. His discourses, by doing something, proved themselves to be something. It may be that his hearers seldom said much about the garb in which he clothed the truth; or about the ability of the preacher; but there was apt to be thought about the matter of his preaching, and the application of it. Like Christ, as a preacher, he was not wont to have indifferent hearers. There was a nakedness, a directness, and an authority in his exhibitions of the Gospel, as made by one evidently assisted of the Holy Spirit, such as effectually precluded indifference. Few ministers succeed better than he did, in edifying the body of Christ; while the vain, the supercilious and proud, the contemptuous, and the devotees of pleasure, money or ambition, who heard him, ever found it difficult to preserve their self-complacency, and maintain their feeling of security. Under his preaching, the thoughts of many hearts were revealed. His discourses were likened, by a ministerial brother, to "the load-stone applied to steel-filings in a heap of cinders." The friends of Christ were brought out decidedly on the one side; and his enemies, on the other. It is not often that we find in the preacher, in combi-

nation, such personal meekness and tenderness as his, and such unflinching integrity and undeviating fidelity to the Divine claims and honor.

All periods impose on the minister special obligations and duties. There were no long periods during which there were not numbers, more or less, awakened under his ministry. Yet there were periods, which might be denominated *times of declension.* At such periods he was anxious, and ceased not to portray the guilt and the danger implied in a state of general apathy. He was wont to scrutinize his own life and motives; and to exhort the members of the church to inquiry and circumspection. He would lead the way, in the employment of the appropriate means for spiritual invigoration, and in repeating the use of them; till, with God's blessing, they became effectual.

In periods of *revival*, of which he was permitted to witness many, great was his joy, abundant were his toils, and singular his watchfulness against whatever might grieve the Holy Spirit. He was as solicitous for the purity of a revival, as for its extension. In many instances he did not hesitate, at once, to discourage and beat off from hope, those who had begun to indulge it; and in all cases, he was as faithful as he was affectionate. Many blessed him on earth, and will bless him in heaven for his love to

their souls; and the more for its fidelity, triumphing over the suggestions of a false tenderness, that might have been ruinous. There were exceptions, but converts under his ministry, generally, wore well.

In the exercise of discipline, and adjudicating between opposing parties, whether in the churches with which he labored; or when called to sit in council, he was gentle, reasonable and impartial; but inflexibly firm in maintaining what he regarded as the claims of truth and righteousness. He was out-spoken; not doubled-tongued. He did not bring himself or others into trouble by vain attempts to please all parties, and by contradictory professions of friendship. Says one who knew him well: "He never flattered. I believe that Paul, with all his prying scrutiny, plain dealing, and inflexible adherence to truth, would not have found that in him to reprove, which he found in Peter. He practised no sort of dissimulation. He did his blessed Master's work with an unflinching integrity and steadfastness, while to every compromising Sanballat and Tobias he practically said: 'I am doing a great work; so that I can not come down.'"

In his *personal intercourse* with men, he did not strive, nor cry, but in an unobtrusive manner, and often unobserved, he "went about doing good." The good effects of his conversation, as well as preaching, are found in all the towns in which he labored.

The compiler can sincerely say, that he seems to himself to have essentially failed in depicting adequately nearly every one of the features in the portrait of that life which it has been his privilege for many years to look upon, and from a great variety of stand-points; and which has ever seemed to him to be marked by an exceeding loveliness not without grandeur; beauty and grandeur, not indeed of the sort which the unthinking of this world chiefly admire, but heavenly, and most worthy to be loved.

But, so far, it has been the portrait of the *outward life*, only, that has been attempted. It has not been possible, nor important, to keep principles of life entirely out of view, but we have spoken, directly and chiefly, of external manifestations; of Mr. Peet, as he has been seen and known of men. Having noticed favorable providential arrangements in respect to him, we have spoken of his industry, not the impulses from which it sprang; of the purity of his conversation, not of his heart; of his modesty, and not his humility. Of course, there was the inward as well as the outward life. He had principles of conduct. These the Omniscient only sees, and unerringly knows. We can only infer them from outward demonstrations. When we are the most confident, our knowledge is only inferential. "The tree is known by its fruits." Here we should be diffident; and

yet generally we need not be perplexed. As the tree is known by its fruits, we should scrupulously estimate it by its fruits, and by nothing else; and still, these, in almost all cases, if properly observed, will lead us to conclusions as satisfactory, as to principles, as it is important, in this world, that we obtain.

It is supposed, that there is as little reason to doubt, that *benevolence* was the ruling principle in the life of the subject of this memoir, as there is in the case of any other man, known by those who have known him. More than usual generosity of disposition he probably possessed, naturally. A holy love of God, and men, was undoubtedly implanted within him while he was a laborer on his brother's farm at West Haven; which predominated more and more, as the ruling principle of his conduct, and with less of the leaven of selfishness, till at the period, when he was called to exchange worlds, it became perfect. It appeared to be large, to embrace all human beings. He was the undeviating friend of the cause of temperance; felt deeply for men in bondage, and sought earnestly to advance the cause of missions. But as is fit, his benevolence seized, with a masterly grasp, on proximate objects, dear relatives, dear friends, a dear people.

Of the particular forms which in him benevolence assumed, there are two so uniform, so promi-

nent and so effective in producing results, that mention of them should not be omitted. They were first, *anxiety for souls committed to his care, with an overwhelming sense of his responsibility as their minister;* and, secondly, *the spirit of prayer.* As to each of these, it is utterly impossible to produce an appreciation of the reality, in the mind of the reader, without such an array of detail as has been judged, on the whole, to be inexpedient. And even were the details to be given, in consequence of our low views, and low piety, there would remain the same difficulties in the way of appreciating him, that exist in appreciating Brainerd and Payson, for he was one of like spirit with them.

It is difficult to determine, whether it was most, concern for souls and a sense of responsibility, that originated prayer; or whether it was most, prayer, that originated the concern and the sense of responsibility. Each, in its turn, was probably both cause and effect. A ministerial brother, who had much intimacy with him, writes: "I shall never forget his prayers. They were like those of Jacob at Penuel, and those of Elijah on Mount Carmel. O! how he did take hold of the horns of the altar! how he did plead with God for dying sinners. He bowed his inmost soul before God in prayer; and God did bow the heavens and come down, in token of his

approbation of prayer, and to show what a God of Almighty power and grace could do."

A sense of responsibility that was awful, was in him associated with no feeling of personal consequence. Far different was its origin. With him it was a settled fact that the Gospel is true; it was a solemn reality, that souls were intrusted to his care; and that their eternal salvation did depend on their obeying the Gospel. Nothing that the multitude, or that individuals of his flock, could do, could apparently divest him of a sense of his responsibility for them. They might withdraw from the worship he conducted; but still his concern followed them, and the burden of their souls rested on him. What will become of them, what can be done for them, were the inquiries of his groaning spirit. And then would come over him an almost insupportable sense of his own impotence, and ignorance, and sinfulness; his unfitness, in every respect, to be employed in such a work, and his unworthiness to be blessed in it. What could he do? and where could he go? There was one thing he could do, and he did it; one place to which he could go, and he went there. He could, and did, go to his place for secret prayer. It was his home. He was there much more oft, and long, than, it is to be feared, is the fact generally with ministers; and his exercises there were as different

from what is common, as they were more frequent and protracted. He would rise at four o'clock on Sabbath morning, and a sense of responsibility and concern so rush upon him, that while he had but partially put on his clothes, he would fall down and weep, and pray, and implore. With this burden, and from prayer and weeping, he would go to the sanctuary; and from the sanctuary he would return to weeping and prayer. Such was his self-government, and his sensitive abhorrence of all exhibitions suited only for sympathetic effect, that the most observant of his hearers might perceive, only, that his spirit was tender and solemn. Most of his own family might perceive nothing more. In the afternoon, it was as in the morning. And on Monday morning, it was scarcely different with him from what it had been on Sabbath morning; and so on the following days of the week. And it was in this way that he lived and labored, month after month, and year after year. It has appeared already, that he spent whole nights in prayer. He may sometimes have been praying, when he should have been sleeping; and may sometimes have been burdened and weeping, when he might have been resting or rejoicing; but O! how many sleep, when they should pray, and are at ease, when there is cause for concern!

From an early period in his religious history, he

coveted and sought solitude; like David, Elijah and John the Baptist, to worship God alone. And looking over his private journal, it is impossible not to be reminded of such passages as these in the life of Christ: "Jesus withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed." "Jesus, when he had sent the multitude away, went up into a mountain, and was there alone." "Jesus saith to his disciples, 'Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.'" "In the morning, Jesus rising up a great while before day, went out, and departed to a solitary place, and there prayed."

Seeing what he was in prayer, we wonder not at what he was in other respects; that the people among whom he labored were often visited with revivals of religion, his preaching was owned and blessed of the Holy Spirit; that laboring in a region sparsely populated, and amid many disadvantages, as he did, he saw so much good accomplished by his instrumentality, and so many pleasing changes effected about him; and that so many on earth and in another world, will for ever bless God for him, without whose concern and labors and intercessions in their behalf, the visions of heaven might never have risen upon their souls. "Them that honor me, I will honor."

"Prayer ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.
Who worships the great God, that instant joins
The first in heaven, and sets his foot on hell."

Honored father, thou weepest and bearest burdens no longer. Thy supplications are exchanged for praise. May we be forgiven, if while thou wast with us, we knew but imperfectly thy modest worth. Though we saw thee seldom on our public platforms; and in our largest assemblies, thou wast a silent listener, when it had been well for us, if thou hadst often spoken; we will not forget thy work, thy example and thy spirit; and if we may but come to any seat, in that world to which thou art gone, it shall be enough, though in honor it be far below that which thy Master, whom thou didst serve with so true a heart, has assigned to thee.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM HIS OCCASIONAL AND FRAGMENTARY WRITINGS.

In this chapter, the reader is presented with occasional pieces from his pen, together with detached passages from his writings. They are given, as suited to be useful, rather than, as being intellectually more remarkable than others that might have been selected. In the first article may be seen, what were his views, and how unequivocally he was accustomed to speak his views, of the great doctrines of the Gospel.

THE EVANGELICAL SYSTEM.

According to this system, Jehovah exists with all infinite perfections, the only living and true God, the Creator, Preserver and Moral Governor of the Universe. The one God exists in three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. God is a holy Sovereign; requiring his rational creatures to love and serve him supremely. Man is constituted a moral, accountable agent; reasonably subject to a divine law, supported by the sanctions of eternal life and eternal death. The progenitors of our race transgressed the Divine command, and thereby forfeited life, and merited the threatened death; and their apostacy has so affected their

posterity, that in consequence of it, our whole race are naturally destitute of holiness; so that whenever they become capable of moral action, they act wickedly, withhold from God their hearts, and refuse the obedience which he demands; and are thereby obnoxious to the penalty of his law:—"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the Book of the Law, to do them." Hence they are in a lost and perishing state; not only as being under condemnation, but so depraved, so inclined to sin, and so unmeet for heaven, as to be ruined forever, without a change of heart. God, in his unsearchable wisdom, and influenced by his own infinite benevolence, devised a method of redemption by appointing his only begotten Son, or the eternal Word, which was with God, and which was God, to become incarnate, and, in that capacity, suffer as an expiatory sacrifice, for the sins of men; that pardon might be extended to trangressors consistently with justice, on condition of repentance and faith in Christ. All who hear the Gospel are invited to come to Christ by repentance and faith; assured of pardon and eternal life if they comply; and there is nothing which prevents their salvation but a voluntary aversion to God and holiness; which aversion, however, is so unyielding, that, by motives merely, unattended by Divine assistance, men are never persuaded to repent. It is the prerogative of the Almighty, by the influences of his Spirit, to make such an application of the truth to the mind of the sinner, as shall effectually convince his conscience, overcome his aversion, and dispose him cheerfully to surrender to Christ and obey the truth. And all they who through his grace are brought to Christ renewed in heart, are enabled to endure in faith and holiness unto the end; and will, at the second coming of Christ to judge the world, be acquitted from the sentence of eternal death and received to everlasting life; while all the impenitent and unbelieving will be doomed to everlasting death or misery.

I contend earnestly for the doctrines involved in this system.

1. *So far as these doctrines are matter of personal consciousness, their truth is attested by Christian experience.* Though many labor to expunge these doctrines from the Book of God, others receive them with interest, perceiving their consistency and excellence. They believe them to be doctrines of inspiration. They

have an experimental knowledge, or inward evidence, that they are the truth; in accordance with what the Scriptures teach: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." A multitude of witnesses might be adduced, who would testify, that what these doctrines teach of the depravity and perverseness of the human heart, of the sinner's condemnation, lost state, and exposure to endless wrath, of his need of renewing grace, and the merits of the infinite Saviour, they have seen and felt; and that, at a subsequent period, they surrendered to Christ, in the full conviction that he is the only Saviour of lost men, as these doctrines teach; impelled by a power which they readily ascribe to Divine grace. They also see a preciousness and glory in Christ, and a beauty and an excellence in Divine things generally, which they see nowhere else, and experience a peace and joy in believing which they derive from no other source; all which is according to what these doctrines teach. Thousands of the best men that live thus testify; and they are competent witnesses. No good reason can be assigned why their testimony should not be received as having weight.

2. *These doctrines produce effects similar to those produced by the preaching of the Apostles.* By the Apostles' preaching men were convicted of sin and guilt, and exposure to wrath, and cried out, "What shall we do to be saved." And they were brought to repentance and a new course of life. They manifested a change of views, feelings, affections, desires, motives, purposes and joys. The change in them was so great that it was called a new creation. Similar effects are produced by the Gospel, in the present age; and manifestly, too, by these peculiar doctrines. Examine places which have experienced revivals of religion. Notice those changes which most nearly resemble in apparent genuineness and permanency those to which I have alluded; and you will find them brought about by the instrumentality of these evangelical doctrines. This fact is too obvious to be denied. And if the effects are similar, it argues that the causes are similar; that these doctrines are essentially the Gospel of Christ.

3. *I believe, that these doctrines are taught in the Bible, and constitute the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel;* essential parts

of "the faith once delivered to the saints;" leading truths in the great system of truth, which Jehovah has deemed it important to reveal for the honor of his own name, for maintaining his moral government, and for the salvation of men. I believe that these doctrines are taught in the Scriptures, notwithstanding all the attempts I have seen to explain away and refute them. No candid, honest and faithful exposition of the Scriptures, I am persuaded, can exclude these doctrines. On the other hand, every attempt to exclude them has appeared to me sophistical and inconclusive, and to betray a defect in first principles and great ignorance of spiritual things. After all the attempts to weaken the authority of the Scriptures, I am well convinced that their divine inspiration rests upon an immovable basis, and that the things they declare are the declarations of God, and of course do not become untrue, because carnal men do not believe and love them. Some, we know, believe that men are not in a depraved, guilty and ruined state;—do not need the special grace of God to heal and save them;—do not need an Almighty Saviour, but that a created being can do all that is necessary; that none deserve endless punishment, or will ever experience it. These views, I am persuaded, cannot be supported without doing violence to the general tenor of the Scriptures, and to many of their plainest declarations in particular. The arguments, I apprehend, may be shown to be defective, and the explanations unnatural or unfair. I am well persuaded that if the Scriptures teach any thing, they teach views essentially different from these, even the opposite doctrines of the evangelical system. No arguments which I have yet seen employed to do away the future endless punishment of the wicked avail with me, so long as I hear from the inspired Scriptures that tremendous sentence of the Judge: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." No history or explanation of the Valley of Hinnom will help us here. This fearful language respects the judgment, when all nations will stand before the judgment seat of Christ; when the wicked of all nations will be separated from the righteous of all nations and receive their sentence for eternity. Nor does it avail any thing more with me, to labor as many do, to make the Greek

word, aion, limit the punishment of the wicked to some period which will have an end. Since I see the same word used to express the duration of the happiness of the righteous, and of the sufferings of the wicked, I must conclude that if the former will be endless, so must be the latter.

These doctrines are revealed to be a rule of practice as well as a rule of faith. They call on fallen man to change his course, and change it greatly, too. The man who does not embrace and obey these truths resists the authority of God; and so far as himself is concerned, defeats the ends of a revelation. He is not reclaimed from his sinful course, nor delivered from the doom that awaits the ungodly.

PREJUDICE.

Prejudice is judgment beforehand. A prejudiced mind judges before examining; forms opinions of things before becoming acquainted with them, or fairly understanding them. Prejudice may be in favor of an object, or against it. As the term is more generally understood and used, it is against an object. It may originate in a native aversion, may grow out of ignorance, or spring from casualty.

Prejudice is of baleful tendency. It is injurious to him who indulges it, and is injustice to its object. Prejudice is indulged by many against religion. Many judge and condemn religion without a fair examination; not taking the trouble to acquaint themselves with its nature and principles, its aims and ends. They know not what it is, but only know it is something of which they think ill. They regard it as a gloomy thing, not lovely nor desirable; a thing without which there is greater enjoyment, than with it. Many, under the influence of prejudice, discard the doctrines of the Gospel without a candid examination. They listen to every thing unfavorable to these doctrines which they hear, but do not regard as entitled to much weight what they may chance to hear in their favor. The very name by which the system of evangelical doctrines is designated, is to many odious. A parish in Massachusetts gave a minister a call to settle with them; a man of good talents and unexceptionable qualifications. He

wished to defer his answer till he could consult his friends. While he was absent, an influential individual suggested to some of the people, that their candidate was a Hopkinsian. "Is he indeed? Then it will not do to settle him." The candidate returned, with a view to accept the call, but found that prejudice had been there before him, and he was not wanted. Said a woman, living in a plantation in this vicinity, that had not been visited by a congregational minister, "I really wish I could see a Calvinist; I should like to see how he looks." She imagined that a Calvinist must possess an uncouth visage, or be different from other men in his appearance. A Unitarian in A——, on going to meeting, found that his own minister was not in the pulpit, but had exchanged; and, imagining that the minister present was of the Orthodox, from a neighboring parish, he could hear nothing but terror, and went home, declaring that he would not hear him in the afternoon. It was found that the preacher was a Unitarian, and had but preached a mild sermon to youth.

Prejudice, in ages past, transformed the humble and inoffensive disciples of Christ into the vilest of heretics and evil-doers; ascribing to them a character so odious and wicked, that it was accounted lawful, and even a duty, to destroy them, by thousands, and hunt them out of the world. It inflicted the most barbarous cruelties that malignant ingenuity could devise. For prejudice there is a cure—Divine grace is competent to its removal. It has cured many. How the Apostle of the Gentiles loved, and labored to promote those doctrines and that cause, which he had labored to destroy! Among the *means* to be employed for the cure of prejudice, a thorough acquaintance with the objects towards which it is indulged, is important. The Scriptures furnish us with a notable example. There were strong prejudices existing against Jesus of Nazareth, and because he was of Nazareth, a place proverbially bad. Jesus, seeing two of John's disciples leaving John and following him, said unto them, "What seek ye?" They said unto him, "Master, where dwellest thou?" He said unto them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he dwelt, were convinced that he was the Messiah, and became his disciples. One of them, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, being anxious that others should know Jesus also, as young converts generally are, and as

Christians should always be, first found his own brother, Simon, and said unto him, "We have found the Messiah, and brought him to Jesus." The next day Jesus found Philip of Bethsaida, and said unto him, "Follow me." Philip, on becoming acquainted with Jesus, was so much interested in him, that he sought out Nathaniel, and said unto him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathaniel, though a good man, was not free from the power of prejudice, and was led to doubt whether Jesus could be the Messiah if he originated in Nazareth, and readily expressed his doubts—"Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" This was prejudging, having the mind fixed beforehand, that nothing good could come from a place so wicked. Philip did not stop to argue the case and labor to convince him, that though Nazareth had a bad name, yet possibly something good might be found there, but invited him to come and see for himself, and judge according to knowledge, and not according to impressions he might be cherishing in his ignorance. Nathaniel came to Jesus, saw him, heard his words, found evidence that there was good in Nazareth, lost his prejudice, and became a disciple.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

This world is no man's permanent home. When a few years are come we shall all leave it. And where are we going? To what country are we bound? And what will be our condition there? Will it be better than here? If we believe so, what is the evidence that sustains that belief? Are there good things hid from us by the curtain of time, and that lie beyond it? And are there evil things? Is there any thing to be done by mortals, while here, whereby they may secure good and avoid evil in the world to come? If so, what is it? And have we done it? Are our prospects good for the future?

"Important journey! awful view!
How great the change, the scenes how new!
The golden gates of heaven displayed,
Or hell's fierce flames, and gloomy shade."

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

Husbands and wives exert an important influence over each other. The Christian husband may be the means of the conversion of his unbelieving wife; or the wife, who is a believer, may be the means of the salvation of her impenitent husband. This is a Scriptural sentiment. "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband; or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" And it accords with facts. In how many instances has the believing husband, or wife, by fervent prayer and faithful effort, seen an unbelieving companion converted? Is there not a *possibility? And what an object!*

JESUS STILLING THE TEMPEST.

It was in the darkness of the night; the disciples were on ship-board in the midst of the sea; and a great storm arose. The angry billows were dashing and breaking upon their frail bark, one moment rising upon the mountain wave, then plunging into the yawning gulf. The ship was fast filling, and threatened to be soon buried in the mighty deep. In their consternation they awoke their Master, who was asleep in the hinder part of the ship, and said unto him, "Lord, save us, we perish." He said unto them, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Have you forgotten that you have the Messiah, the Son of God, with you; and that with him you are safe? "Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm."

There is another scene, somewhat resembling this. It is laid in the breast of the awakened sinner. The impenitent man was sailing upon the ocean of life, pursuing his course, as he thought, prosperously and safely upon a smooth sea, with a fair prospect of making the haven of eternal rest. On having his eyes opened to survey his condition and prospects, he unexpectedly found the sky lowering and a storm approaching; and as he looked the heavens gathered blackness; the lightning blazed; the tempest howled; the billows dashed upon his bark; the gulf of perdition

yawned to receive him. Destruction seemed inevitable. His distress was great. What could be done? He looked about for help, but looked in vain for aid from human helpers. Despairing of safety from every other source, he directed his eye to Jesus, saying, "Save, Lord, I perish." The Saviour heard; he smiled; he said, "Peace, be still!" The lightning ceased; the storm was hushed; the tempest calmed; the clouds and darkness dispersed; the sun appeared in brightness. And his tempest-tossed bark, emerging from the breaking billows, now rested on a smooth surface and glided safely o'er a tranquil sea to the haven of eternal rest. Thus, by a word, Jesus of Nazareth has given peace to thousands of troubled souls.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS LEGACY TO THE CHURCHES IN SOMERSET.

Mr. Peet was one of the originators of the Somerset Conference of Churches, and was its scribe, from its commencement till a short time previous to his death. He ever manifested a lively interest in the welfare of this organization of the churches; and he uniformly contributed much by his presence and efforts, to render its meetings profitable. This chapter embraces two dissertations read by him, in accordance with assignment before that Conference. The first was read at a meeting of the Conference, at Mercer, September, 1845, and was immediately adopted by them as their circular letter, with a request, that it be read in each of the churches in the county. The other was read at a meeting of the Conference, at Madison, in the year 1846; and not less than the first, in its subject, is connected with the vital interests of religion. If the churches with which he was so long associated, shall heed the

counsels imparted in these papers, they and their children will thereby secure benefits more to be prized than large treasures in silver and gold.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The Duty of Christians in a time of Declension.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is fully obvious from the Scriptures, that Christians are required to be co-workers with Christ in carrying into effect his redemption; in promoting the revival of religion, the conversion of sinners, and the prosperity and enlargement of the churches. This is obviously their duty and privilege. There is a manifest connection between certain states of feeling and efforts of Christians and the revival of religion. This is indicated by the Psalmist's exclamation, "O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" He believed, it would seem, that though the revival of religion is the work of God, yet it comes out of Zion, or through the instrumentality of the people of God. And he longed to see that instrumentality so employed, or Zion in such a state as would secure the blessing. He devoutly wished that this blessing was even now *come*. There is then something to be done by Christians to render them instrumental of a revival, or to authorize them to hope for it. What that is, or what will prepare the way, on their part, for the revival of God's work, is of no ordinary importance to be known and done, as no ordinary responsibility rests upon them.

It may well concern us, then, dear brethren, to inquire with solicitude, what is demanded of Christians in the present low state of religion in our churches and community?

We would suggest, as a reply to the inquiry, that it is incumbent on Christians,

1. To survey minutely their *spiritual state*.

When Nehemiah heard, in Babylon, that his people who were left in Jerusalem were in affliction and reproach—that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and her gates burned with fire, he sat down and wept and mourned. Certain days he fasted and

prayed and wept. Then having obtained permission of the king, he repaired to Jerusalem. And having arrived, the first thing he did, was to survey the desolation. He rose in the night and went round the city, examined the breaches in the walls, and ascertained the situation of the city, and what needed to be done, and then set about doing it.

So it would seem to be our first work to survey accurately our spiritual desolations. As we look into the state of our churches, we see the remissness, languor, and worldliness that prevail: see their numbers diminishing and few or none added to supply their places. How unavailing their prayers; how little anxiety is felt for those out of the ark; how little wrestling, agonizing prayer in their behalf; how few tokens of God's special presence are witnessed, and what a general slumbering of the wise virgins, and the foolish together; what faltering of zeal and efforts in the cause of benevolence, and for the salvation of the heathen, as appears from our diminished contributions for these objects.

And it may be incumbent on us, brethren, to survey the condition of those who are without—the multitude of the impenitent, who are going to eternity, in increasing numbers, without God and hope, casting off the fear of God and restraining prayer, devoted to the objects and pleasures of time and sense, imbibing corrupt sentiments in many instances, or addicted to immoral practices, insensible to their guilt and danger, or if not grossly immoral, are relying on some supposed goodness of their own—blind to their sinfulness, ill-desert, and exposed to the wrath of an offended God—feeling no anxious concern about the eternal welfare of the soul—no conviction of their lost and ruined state: feeling no need of repentance, or of applying to Christ, but are putting far away the evil day and neglecting the salvation of the Gospel; or if they give their attendance on the dispensation of the Word, yet seem nothing moved by the truth of God, but are careless and secure, while in the way to death. How few and far between are conversions among them.

And it would seem incumbent on Christians, moreover, to survey the condition and prospects of society and of the communities of the land. See what carelessness and inattention prevail in relation to *spiritual* things—how little acknowledgment

of God, or sense of obligation, or thankfulness to him. What forgetfulness of God, departures from him, and abuse of mercies. What sordid selfishness, excessive worldliness, and strength of covetousness. What trampling on the authority and honor of God, and what disregard of his institutions. What proneness in men to defraud, and wrong, and vilify one another, and invade the rights of others. What opposition to truth and righteousness, What inundations of error, and false religion. What enormities exist in this Christian land. What legalized oppression, and what determination to maintain and perpetuate it. Oppression countenanced too, by many who profess the religion of Christ. How little effect results of late from the Gospel, which is appointed as the grand remedy for these evils. How rare the instances, of late, in which it is seen to be the power of God unto salvation. How long the Spirit has been withheld from the dispensation of it. And how is God frowning upon us in other ways; by blighting the prospects of man—disappointing their expectations. What numerous failures. Men's "wages have been put into a bag with holes." How vast the amount of property destroyed by fire and in other ways. Men have been driven from their dwellings and stripped of their possessions by thousands. God seems to be showing men impressively the sin and the vanity of making wealth their idol. And what destruction of life also by steamboat disasters, and in other ways. Men are sent to eternity by companies. And we are threatened with being further chastised for our sins, with the depopulating, demoralizing, impoverishing scourge of war. What divisions and animosities exist. How are our liberties and invaluable privileges perilled. It concerns us to contemplate these things, to survey these evils, till our hearts become suitably affected.

And further, it concerns us to consider what will be the *results* if this state of things continues,—if this season of spiritual dearth should be prolonged for years to come. What will be the tone of piety—what the state of morals—what the condition of the churches? Where will be our children? What will become of the mass of the impenitent? What will be the fate of our benevolent institutions? What the state of society? and what the prospects of our country? Christians should contemplate, with

alarm, the disastrous consequences of the continuance of this dearth, until they suitably feel the need of a revival, until they feel that the Divine interposition cannot longer be safely dispensed with, but "that it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon us." And,

2. Is it not incumbent on us, brethren, to search out the cause of this declension—ascertain what has led to this state of things; inquire why the Spirit is withheld, and we denied the richest of Heaven's gifts,—that revival of religion, which would heal our disorders and remove the evils we deplore? And here we enter on a humbling work, as we have reason to fear that the evils we deplore are more or less attributable to deficiencies on the part of the people of God,—to something which is not as it should be, in practice, or feeling.

In searching after causes, the first thing that meets us is a criminal departure from our first love. Where are the love and zeal that fired our souls in the days of our espousals, and caused us to desire and resolve to live unto Christ and to spend and be spent for him? Have we not relaxed in our watchfulness against the workings of sin within us, in thought and feeling, word and action; against the temptations and allurements of the world? Has there not been criminal remissness, formality and neglect even in the duties of the closet? Have not Christians, to an alarming extent, yielded to a spirit of worldliness? Have they not become so identified with their worldly interests, suffered their minds to become so engrossed with them, that they can scarcely find time for the daily reading of the Scriptures and for the proper performance of the duty of prayer, morning and evening, in the family and in the closet? can hardly spare time to attend and maintain a prayer meeting in week time, or to attend the Church Conference, or monthly concert? and are often too much fatigued with the business and cares of the world to attend on the Sabbath with wakeful interest. And are we not chargeable with the sin of covetousness? It has been said, and we fear, with too much truth, that covetousness is the grand sin of the church at the present day. It appears in a reluctance to do what is requisite to sustain the institutions of religion, to support the Gospel at home, and to send it to the destitute abroad. May we

not here see a reason why God has withheld his Spirit? The church has withheld her "tithes," and her support from the missionary cause beyond what was meet. When in troublesome times the work of foreign missions was embarrassed, the churches neglected to come up fully to their help. They withheld the gold and silver, which was clearly the Lord's, and some of the missions suffered great injury and reproach, and well nigh failed. And Christ was offended, and the Spirit grieved, and his gracious visits have been suspended since. The church withheld more than was meet and has tended to poverty, in more senses than one. And we may still feel ashamed in view of the diminished amount, or *scantiness* at least, of our contributions to the cause of Christ.

Further, in the manner of observing the Sabbath, may we not find another reason for the withholding of the Spirit? Formerly, much of the Sabbath was spent in reading the Scriptures. But now, very little is read in the Scriptures except in connection with morning and evening devotions. The principal reading, even of professing Christians on that day, is in the religious papers and journals of the day. And though they attend public worship, yet there is reason to fear that they do not go to the sanctuary in the spirit of prayer, expecting to meet God there, and witness tokens of his presence and power in giving efficacy to his Word, agonizing for the conversion of sinners. Do they not go, *not* expecting a blessing? and are they not frequently employed, in the intervals of worship, in conversing about their secular affairs, the state and progress of their crops, &c., showing that the heart is not where it should be on that day? These things, we must believe, are displeasing to God, and may furnish reasons for withholding the influences of his Spirit, and frowning upon us in other ways. Is it not demanded of Christians that they contemplate these things with the deepest concern? And,

3. That with a deep sense of their responsibility, they set about a reformation. And the *first* step which they seem called to take, is to humble themselves before God, in view of his frowns, and their deficiencies and disobedience; that they do this visibly and sincerely. It would seem proper, yea, *demanded*, that the churches in our connection observe a season of simultaneous prayer and fasting, on a specified day, say, the last Saturday in

October. Let the members of each church meet and spend the day in prayer and confessions, and such exhortations and religious exercises, as the occasion would seem to demand; and then spend the ensuing evening in religious exercises in their respective families, calling the attention of the children and members of the family to the vast importance of a revival of religion, and the duty of making special suit to God for it. And let them seek the blessing with earnestness in the closet. And on Sabbath morning, between the hours of eight and nine, let them spend a season in concert, each by himself, and let the Scriptures be read by all. And then let them go the sanctuary, not thinking about their worldly interests, but with sincere desires to honor God, and with hearts agonizing in prayer for a blessing on the word preached, for the presence of the Holy Spirit to awaken the careless, and effect the conviction and conversion of sinners, and the revival of religion.

If Christians are in fault here, if there is something in their practice or spirit which is displeasing to God, and causes him to withhold his Spirit from us,—or if they are neglecting to do those things which might promote the revival of the work of God, then a fearful responsibility is seen to rest upon them. It becomes them with the deepest solicitude to look into their case, to rectify what is amiss,—"to take up the stumbling-block out of the way, to cast up the highway." It concerns them to rouse up, and throw off this remissness and formality,—this worldly-mindedness and covetousness which is so offensive to God: that they honor the Lord with their substance; that they see wherein they have let down their watch, and left their first love, and repent and do their first works; that they return to that love and zeal for God which they felt at their first conversion;—to those ardent desires to honor the Redeemer and live unto him, which they felt in the day of their espousals; to that anxious concern for the impenitent which they then felt; that they return to the faithful performance of all their duties towards God, and their fellow-men, in the family and in the closet; that they maintain and attend the weekly prayer meeting. It is stated of a place in a sister State, that, during a long season of spiritual dearth, Christians in one part of the town kept up a weekly prayer meeting; while in an-

other part it was neglected. At length a revival of religion occurred, and that part where the prayer meeting had been maintained shared richly in the converting influences of the divine spirit, while in that part where the prayer meeting had been neglected, few or no conversions occurred.

It is demanded of Christians that they take time and pains for the stated prayer meetings. That they strengthen each other's hands by punctually attending the Church Conference; that they manifest an interest in the missionary cause by being present at the Monthly Concert, as well as by their liberal contributions; that they encourage each other's hearts by speaking often one to another; that they do not suffer the business or cares of the world, or a worldly spirit to divert them from their spiritual course, and prevent their daily walk with God. But they should take time for duty and for prayer, and overcome the world by "looking at the things which are not seen, and eternal."

A more strict observance of the Sabbath is doubtless demanded of Christians at the present day, by themselves, and in their families. They should show by example, as well as by word, that the Sabbath is not a day for mere bodily rest, or recreations,—is not a season for indulging in vain imaginations, idleness, worldly thoughts or conversation, loose reading,—attending to secular things, making, or receiving visits; but is to be observed in a holy manner, in acts of private and public worship, meditation and prayer, searching the Scriptures, and in attending to the spiritual and eternal interests of the soul. Who will observe the Sabbath suitably, if Christians do not? Who will count the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and will reverence the Author, by a due observance of the day, if Christians do not? And can Christians expect to be heard in their prayers, and visited with special tokens of the Spirit's presence, while trampling on, or neglecting this divine institution, so plainly required to be kept holy?

And perhaps it may be incumbent on Christians and ministers to exhibit more fully and distinctly the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel, which show men their sinfulness by nature,—their exposure to the merited wrath of God, everlasting death,—their lost and helpless condition,—that they lie entirely at the mercy

of a holy Sovereign,—that it depends on his self-moving goodness whether they are renewed to holiness, and saved, or left to perish deservedly in their sins. These, and kindred doctrines have been the grand means of promoting revivals, and effecting the conversion of sinners in every age.

Further, Christians need, at the present time, to "have faith in God," as the Saviour enjoins,—to believe that God is able and willing to do great things for them, for the sake of Christ; great things for Zion, and for sinful men for whom Christ died. It is demanded of them, that they take hold of the *promises* of God, by vigorous faith; bring their children in the arms of faith to a covenant God, and importunately plead his covenant promise in their behalf, laboring earnestly for their conversion, diligently using the ordinary means of grace, looking to God to make them effectual, and believing that he will.

Since the time of protracted meetings has gone by, in which Christians mainly trusted, thinking there could be no revival, or conversions without them,—withdrawing their confidence from the ordinary means,—and since protracted meetings have so generally failed of producing the desired effect, it is demanded of the people of God, that they now return again to the diligent use of the ordinary means of grace which God has appointed, trusting in him to make them effectual. Let them maintain the dispensation of the Gospel, looking to God, and confiding in God to make it effectual to the conversion of sinners, and the revival of his work; believing that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save, but that he can make the ordinary means as effectual as any other, and as effectual now, as in any past age.

In short, it is clearly demanded of Christians at the present time, that they betake themselves to importunate prayer,—to earnest, persevering wrestling with God for the return of his Spirit, and the revival of his work,—that they have their hearts deeply affected in view of the state and condition of the impenitent, and deeply anxious for their salvation; and deeply humbled too in view of the probable fact, that their own deficiencies may be a reason why the spirit is withheld. Then ought we not to feel, dear brethren, that it is time, yea, "high time to awake out of sleep," and cry mightily unto God, and give him no rest, until

he appear and revive us again. If when Zion travaileth, she bringeth forth children, then it would seem that the churches are not now agonizing in prayer for sinners. For where are the children? The new-born souls? Is it not then sacredly incumbent on Christians, at the present time, as the Lord's remembrancers, to remind him of his promises, and plead their accomplishment, to rouse up to unceasing, earnest prayer?—to refuse to be silent, or to be comforted while Zion's ways thus mourn. Let us resolve unitedly, with the Prophet, that "for Zion's sake, we will not hold our peace, and for Jerusalem's sake we will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as the lamp that burneth."

DISSERTATION.

Desecrations of the Christian Sabbath.

There is in men very extensively a proneness to desecrate the Sabbath. They seem loth to observe the institution according to its nature and design. The Author of the Sabbath claims that it be observed as a holy day. He has prescribed, that secular business and recreation, secular thoughts and words, be suspended, and that the day be spent in religious exercises; in the public and private worship of himself; in the searching the Scriptures; in meditation and prayer; in receiving and imparting religious instruction. I need not repeat the command. It is very explicit.

But to an alarming extent, men are prone to deviate from this command, and spend the Sabbath in a very different manner from what is required. Some entirely set aside the Sabbath; pay no regard to the day, as a divine institution. And this is done, not only by individuals, but by communities and nations. France, in the days of her prevailing infidelity, set aside the Sabbath wholly. In her zeal to throw off the restraints of this institution, she changed the mode of reckoning time, dividing it into decades—periods of ten days, instead of seven. Thus the Sabbath was done away; and with it all morality; and a deluge of wickedness, of every form, rolled in upon the land. And even now, the Sabbath, in Paris, is a day of business and pleasure; pre-eminently a season of recreation and amusement.

And it is very much so, in some portions of this professedly Christian country. In New Orleans, as you have noticed, horse-racing and various sports and diversions are the order of the day. And though such open, public desecration of the Sabbath, by communities, is not general in our land, yet, to an alarming extent, individuals may be found pursuing their secular business and various avocations, on that day, regardless of the sacredness of it, and of the authority of Jehovah, in appointing it.

Others, again, while out of regard to their own reputation, or to civil law, they refrain from openly attending to their secular business on this day; yet have no conscientious scruples about pursuing it, in a more private way; by looking over their farms, or their papers, and adjusting things, and planning their business, and getting ready for resuming it early, after the Sabbath is past. Or without troubling their consciences much, they can pursue their journey, return from market, or ride out for pleasure. Others, again, who acknowledge the Sabbath to be of divine appointment, and who profess to regard and observe it as such, yet are very sparing in their observance of it, they are loth to devote the whole of the day to the worship and service of God. They want some time for indulging in extra sleep, some for reading the news, and for worldly conversation. They think it a weariness to attend public worship both parts of the day, unless the exercises are short; can hardly be said to "call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable;" and can hardly wait for the Sabbath to close, before they enter upon some secular business or recreation. Others, again, who admit that the Sabbath is a divine institution, and as such should be observed, yet find much, which they call work of necessity, to be done on that day; as getting in grain, or hay, or securing property which is exposed, pursuing journeys, or running stages, cars, canals or steamboats.

Is there not a very extensive proneness in men thus to abuse this divine institution? In view of this fact, and of the consequences that must result to communities, and to immortal souls, the friends of the Sabbath have taken the alarm, and have rallied, and have combined their influence, and are putting forth efforts, if possible, to rescue the Sabbath from its desecration, and promote the due observance of the institution.

I am unwilling to leave the subject, without suggesting two or three considerations, adapted to deter men from Sabbath desecration. *To desecrate the Sabbath is to act the part of fools and madmen.* They who do it act against their true interests for this world and the next. For the Sabbath is pre-eminently a benevolent institution, designed and adapted to benefit man. Said our Saviour, "The Sabbath was made for man." It was made for promoting and securing his best interests, his spiritual and eternal well-being. But, say some, if the Sabbath was made for man, then we may use it as we please; make it subservient to interest or convenience; or at least, we need not be so scrupulously exact in our observance of it. But it is to be remembered, that it is the Sabbath that was made for man, that was designed to be thus promotive of his best good. This holy day is the boon. If, then, we would realize the benefit designed, we must make a Sabbath of it. We must observe it, according to its nature, as required. If we do not do this, if we make it, or use it, like other days, it is no Sabbath to us. We deprive ourselves of the benefits of this divine institution. Thus by desecrating the Sabbath, men counteract the benevolent purpose of their Creator in giving them this institution, and deprive themselves of the good designed them. They act against their own true interests.

By desecrating the Sabbath, men not only wrong themselves, but do immense injury to others. They spread mischief among their fellow men. They do vast injury to the community in which they reside. They do this by their example and influence; and owing to human perverseness, a corrupt example is imitated more readily, and extends more rapidly, than a virtuous example. Hence, as we read, "One sinner destroyeth much good." See how sure, and how rapid this influence in families where the parents desecrate the Sabbath. They not only do not instruct their children to keep the day holy unto God, but they teach them by their example that they need not observe the day in this manner; and how ready, and how sure are they to follow the example. How soon they are found trampling on the Sabbath, neglecting the worship of God, and searching the Scriptures; and are seen at their plays and sports, and, in various ways, profaning the day, without compunctions of conscience. And how pernicious the influence of a

few such families upon the young people in the neighborhood, or community. And suppose so many of the leading families, in a place, should be so loose on the subject, that the public worship could not be maintained, as would be the case, if the Sabbath were to be laid aside, how rapidly would immorality and vice prevail, and how rampant in wickedness would the youth soon become.

How mischievous, how deplorable, especially the example and influence of men of wealth and of high standing in society, men in office, civil rulers and others, when they desecrate the Sabbath, and trample on this holy day, and neglect the worship of God. What multitudes are emboldened by their example, to pursue a similar course, to disregard and profane this day, neglect the worship of God, and hence the concerns of their souls, and the great salvation. Thus, they, who desecrate and profane God's holy day, not only wrong and ruin their own souls, but diffuse mischief and wickedness through the community, and are accessory to the ruin of other souls.

For men thus to desecrate and profane the Sabbath of the Lord, is daring impiety. It is trampling on the known and sacred institution of Jehovah; refusing to obey his plainly-expressed command, and, thus, contemning the authority of the most high God. It is refusing to acknowledge, and worship and honor God, their Maker and Sovereign.

God has set his Sabbath as a sign between himself and the children of men. As such the Sabbath serves to develope human character; to show whether men will serve, worship and honor God, or not; to show who will do this, and who will refuse. In committing his Sabbath to men, God has been pleased to lay upon them a plain, positive, explicit command. They cannot, therefore, plead ignorance of his will. Hence, they who observe the day according to the commandment, and they only, exhibit a conduct, showing that they have the fear of God before their eyes, and the love of God in their hearts; that they respect his authority, and honor, and have pleasure in his service and worship. They who refuse to regard and observe aright this divine institution; who profane this holy day, contemning his known command, show that they are opposed to God, and that they do not fear to contemn his authority. They practically say that they will not obey

God. "Who is the Lord that we should serve him? We know not the Lord, neither will we obey his voice."

Thus, the Sabbath is a sign between God and man, a test by which to try and prove them. It serves to show, when God's will is clearly known, who will obey, and who will not obey him. It is plain, therefore, that they who profane the Sabbath, are in a state of active rebellion against God, and guilty of impiety of the most daring character. And shall not God visit in his wrath a people who do this?

God is jealous for his honor. He will arise and take vengeance on them who thus trample it in the dust. Let us, then, as individuals, as churches, and communities, feel concerned for the honor of God ourselves, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, and lend our aid to those who are laboring to recover it from its desecration, and to promote its due observance.

SERMONS.

SERMON I.

GOD INCOMPREHENSIBLY GREAT AND GOOD.

JOB XI. 7.

Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

MEN are naturally prone to think little of God. It is said of the wicked, "God is not in all their thoughts." Most who do think of God, and who have some knowledge of him, are content with entertaining vague, and very inadequate conceptions of his being and perfections; incompatible with a due reverence for God, and due respect for his authority. To know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, is the highest and most important knowledge to which mortals can attain. For improving our knowledge of the Divine Being we have great advantages, both in the word of God, and in his wonderful works. And yet the utmost knowledge, to which mortals can attain, falls infinitely below what is to be known of the Divine Being. Created

minds are too limited to gain or receive any thing like a perfect knowledge of the infinite God. The more we search into, and contemplate his being and attributes, and the more extended the discoveries we obtain of his perfections; the more we become lost in amazement in view of his unsearchable greatness; and the more deeply impressed with his incomprehensible excellence. We are shown by the text that no finite mind can search out the nature and perfections of God; but that he is incomprehensible. We may, by searching, find God; but cannot find him out. We cannot describe his nature, nor his excellence;—nor fathom the depths of his wisdom, or designs,—nor ascertain the bounds of his power.

Who can comprehend the *nature* of God? What constitutes his essence? He is said to be a Spirit. But who can comprehend a Spirit? And especially an infinite Spirit? What is the essence of a Spirit? Who has seen it, or who can describe it? Who can comprehend the *manner* or mode of the Divine existence;—a trinity in *Unity*;—three persons,—but one God. One God existing in three persons. We know the fact, because it is revealed. But what can we do towards comprehending it? God is incomprehensible in *his attributes*. Who can comprehend the *duration* of his existence? Existence without

beginning, and without ending? We can go back in thought, and conceive of God as existing before any creature was formed;—before he began the work of creation;—and can conceive of his existing alone, and being infinitely happy in the possession of his own perfections, and prerogatives, and in the contemplation of his purposes, ages before any other beings existed. But what can we do towards comprehending, or even conceiving of existence which had no beginning? Go back in thought, myriads of years, till imagination is wearied by flight, and you find God existing in all his attributes. But what have you gained? You would then be no nearer the beginning of his existence than you are now; for it *had* no beginning. And as the Divine existence had no beginning; it will have no *end.* Contemplate, then, a Being who exists from everlasting, or, without beginning; and who will ever continue to exist; who, when millions and millions of ages shall have rolled away, will be no older than he is now:—no nearer his end than now; and what have you done, and what can you do, towards comprehending the eternity of God's existence?

God is equally incomprehensible in his *omnipresence.* That God is essentially present in all parts of his Universe, is a doctrine clearly taught in his Word. Says one inspired, "Whither shall I go from

thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." We cannot comprehend the fact that God is present in all parts of this little globe on which we dwell;—present in every family;—with every solitary individual;—and in all the numerous and infinitely diversified scenes and events that are transpiring on earth; exercising an agency, and exerting an energy, in nourishing every creature that exists; in effecting the productions of the earth; and in upholding and moving all things in the natural world. If we extend our view to the other planetary orbs connected with our System; some of which are much larger than this, and, no doubt, have a much more numerous population of intelligent beings than ours;—we find that God is equally present in them all, exerting in them equally an agency and an energy, not only in upholding them and moving them in their orbits, but in upholding and nourishing the myriads of their inhabitants. But we cannot stop here. The eye ranges through the visible heavens, and fastens upon the numerous fixed stars that are hung out in the open space, at immense distances from us. Each of

these we suppose to be a sun to another system of worlds, like ours; all peopled with intelligent beings. In all these worlds, and with all these myriads of beings, Jehovah is equally present, every where, as with us.

But reason, authorized by the science of Astronomy, extends the view still farther, and perceives other systems of worlds as far beyond these, and others still beyond those, in every direction, in all which God is every where present. And here we must not exclude from our contemplation, *infinite space*. From this little orb to which we are confined, we look out into the open space around us, with some amazement, at what we are enabled to behold of the wonderful dwelling place of the Creator. But still our limited vision can penetrate but a little way into the vast expanse. What can you do, my hearers, towards comprehending boundless space? Conceive, if you can, of expanse without limits. Put your imagination upon the flight, and pass rapidly by system after system of worlds even far beyond the orbit of the comet, which has been longest in performing its revolution, of any which have been discovered; and pursue your course till imagination becomes weary in the flight, and you find no bounds to space. You even approach no nearer the limits of the infinite expanse, for it has

no limits. Indeed we can conceive of none. Were we to admit the idea of bounds to infinite space, what can constitute those bounds? What can be found beyond this space to limit it? What can we conceive of as existing that can furnish bounds? We may call back imagination unsatisfied, for there are no bounds. But who can comprehend boundless space? How lost are we in the contemplation of it! Yet Jehovah fills it all, and has decked and garnished it with innumerable orbs of light, and worlds peopled with intelligent beings, which he holds in the open space fixed or revolving in the utmost order and harmony. This universe of space, with its worlds of intelligent beings, is Jehovah's dwelling place;—his house. He occupies and fills it all. Well might the Saviour say, "In my Father's house are many mansions." Jehovah surely is not to be comprehended by any finite mind. God is incomprehensible also in the attribute of *power*. The power of God must necessarily be infinite, as it is an essential attribute of an infinite Being. This will be manifest, also, if we contemplate its effects. What shall we say of power that could build this mighty Universe;—the countless worlds that are hung out in the open space, and are made to revolve around their centres in perfect order;—that could create all that these worlds contain, animate and in-

animate;—all the myriads of intelligent beings that people these worlds;—that upholds all these worlds, and all the inhabitants that exist;—that provides for the support of all;—for the laws of nature, so called, according to which the earth brings forth her productions for the support of its inhabitants, are nothing more nor less than Divine power operating in a uniform manner. See his power displayed in wielding the elements,—as in tempest, the tornado, the flood, the volcano, the earthquake.

The power of God is further illustriously displayed, as well as his wisdom and goodness, in the wonderful work of Redemption;—also in the conversion of sinners;—in the continuance, efficacy, and success of the Gospel, which is *the power of God* unto salvation;—also in the perseverance and complete sanctification of the Saints, who are kept by the power of God;—also, in the amazing event,—the resurrection of the dead, when the generations under ground will be raised to life at once from their scattered dust;—their bodies reunited to their immortal spirits to be separated no more;—and also in the final retribution of the righteous and the wicked—the latter sent away into everlasting punishment, and the former raised to a state of endless and ineffable glory and blessedness in heaven. Thus the Omnipotence of God is beyond the comprehension of finite minds.

Hence it is written, "Great is Jehovah, and of great power. His understanding is infinite." "Lo! these are parts of his ways, but the thunder of his power who can understand?"

Further, God is incomprehensible in the attribute of *Omniscience;*—the attribute by which he knows all things. God's omniscience results from his Omnipresence. As he is every where present, and fills *all things*, he must have a perfect knowledge of all things. This knowledge implies *prescience.* It is a knowledge of things future, as well as of things present and past. This results from the *eternity* of his being. As he is from everlasting to everlasting, —as he fills eternity as he does immensity of space, he must have a perfect knowledge of all things past, present and future.

Hence it is written, "The Lord is a God of knowledge, declaring the end from the beginning." "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." As he knows his own plan,—he knows what will be done. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight. For all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." "There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves." "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering." "Darkness and light

are both alike to him." He also knows the secret workings and emotions of every heart. Said the Psalmist, "Thou knowest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways; and there is not a word upon my tongue, but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high. I cannot attain unto it." Saith the Alpha and Omega, "I search the heart and try the reins." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God;—how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "There is no searching of his understanding." "His understanding is infinite."

God is incomprehensible in his *purposes and designs.* None can fathom the depth of his counsels.

His purposes were formed in eternity in wisdom and benevolence. Of their depth and extent we can know nothing further than they are actually revealed or developed in time. But as secret things belong to God, and as his counsels are but partially developed to our understanding, and as much yet remains a secret with him, to be unfolded and accomplished in future ages, or in eternity, we cannot pass judgment upon them; knowing, as we do, so little of their nature and extent. "His judgments are a great deep" which no finite mind can fathom.

"With him is strength and wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his." "In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind."

"Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decree;—
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave *to be*.

Chained to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men;
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen.

Here he exalts neglected worms,
To sceptres, and a crown;
And there the following page he turns,
And treads the monarch down.

Not *Gabriel* asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite Angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

The same is true, to a great extent, of his *providential dealings*. Many of the events of his Providence are inscrutable to finite minds. They are dark and mysterious. We cannot perceive the design or object. We can assign no satisfactory reason for them. It is emphatically true, with respect to much of the providential conduct of Jehovah, as the Saviour said, "What I do, thou knowest not now." The events of his Providence, as far as they go, are the development, or unfolding, of his secret purposes. And as the heavens are high above the

earth;—so his thoughts are above our thoughts, and his ways above our ways. Hence we cannot comprehend the reasons for much of the Divine conduct.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

And yet we are assured, "His work is perfect. For all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."

I observe once more, God is incomprehensible in the *dispensations of his grace.* God does not bestow the blessings of his grace and salvation upon individuals or communities, imparting to all equally. Some places are visited with refreshings from his presence, and sinners are converted, and Christians quickened; while other places remain like the mountains of Gilboa, having no rain nor dew. And even in places where he pours out of his Spirit, all do not share it equally. "One is taken and another left." And in many instances they are made trophies of grace, who, to human view, were most unlikely to become such; while others of fair exterior, and serious deportment, remain unchanged.

This conduct shows his Sovereignty, and is in accordance with his own declaration, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Here again we are lost in wonder and amazement in view of the dispensations of God's grace. They are a great deep, which we cannot fathom. We may not inquire why he does thus, or so; much less may we presume to censure or pass judgment upon any of the acts of his sovereign grace. The reasons for his conduct are with himself. It is not our province to demand them.

"May not the sovereign Lord on high,
Dispense his favors as he will,
Choose some to life while others die,
And yet be just and gracious still?"

Here, we cannot comprehend God's ways:

"Then let our souls adore our God,
Who deals his graces as he please,
Nor gives to mortals an account,
Or of his actions or decrees."

And it is interesting to observe, further, that the Being who is thus incomprehensible in the respects already named, possesses also, in the highest degree, every *moral* perfection.

He is not only unsearchable in greatness, but glorious in holiness. The Prophet, in a vision, saw the Lord seated upon a throne high and lifted up,

and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim, each having six wings, and one cried to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." Said Joshua to Israel, "Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God." "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."

We have ample assurance from Divine Revelation that the Being who is incomprehensible in knowledge, wisdom and power, is also just and good and true, and infinitely benevolent.

When his servant, Moses, requested that he might behold the glory of God, the answer of Jehovah was, that he would cause his goodness to pass before him. And hence he proclaimed himself "The Lord God, merciful and gracious;—long-suffering and abundant in goodness,—forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

They whom John saw in vision standing upon a sea of glass, with the harps of God, sung the song of Moses and the Lamb, and said, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear thee, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy." Though clouds and darkness are round about him;—though his purposes and ways are unfathomable, yet justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

But the benevolence and mercy of God are illustriously displayed and proved by the wonderful method of redemption, in the giving of his coequal Son a ransom for us;—opening the way, by his atoning death, for goodness and mercy to flow to the guilty and the lost. Hence an Apostle says to the Jews, "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, long-suffering and forbearance, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Here it appears that riches of goodness, long-suffering and forbearance, come from him as an overflowing fountain of benevolence, and through the atoning merits of Christ's blood flow down to guilty men.

We are then constrained to admit that God is *incomprehensible* in his *essence*, his *nature*, the *mode* of his *existence*, his purposes, and in all his *attributes*. We have the means of knowing something of God,—even all that is necessary to our duty and obedience, and to secure our salvation. But we cannot know him unto perfection. The ages of his eternity cannot be numbered, nor the space of his immensity measured. The depth of his wisdom and counsels cannot be fathomed, nor the extent of his power bounded. The brightness of his glory can never be described, nor an inventory made of the treasures of his goodness.

With the subject before us, I remark,

1. *What cause for joy and rejoicing is the fact that God is on the throne of the Universe.*

We may rest assured that he will accomplish his deep designs;—will produce the greatest amount of good. His admission of partial evil will be for the bringing about of a greater good. He will overrule all things for the furtherance of his own glory, which will involve and secure the greatest happiness of all who love and serve him. There is, then, ground for the fullest confidence in God. In the language of inspired Saints, we may say, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." "Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

2. Consideration of the Being and attributes of the infinite God should serve to fill us with the *deepest humility and self-abasement;*—humility in view of our own ignorance, littleness, and limited powers; being able to know and comprehend so little of the Divine Being, his attributes, designs, works and ways,—and hence poorly competent to sit in judgment upon the purposes of God, or upon the acts or dispensations of his Providence. Self-abasement, in view of our own unlikeness to God;—numerous transgressions of his reasonable commands, and wide deviations from his known will. Well may we abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes.

3. The due contemplation of the incomprehensible God is adapted to awaken in the mind *the deepest reverence and the most devout adoration.* Who can dwell upon his unsearchable nature, attributes and perfections;—his glorious excellence;—wondrous works and ways, and inscrutable dispensations and purposes;—without being filled with reverential awe and godly fear; without adoring the Being whose attributes and ways are thus past finding out? And how suitable is the language of them who will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and say, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear thee and glorify thy name, for thou alone art holy."

4. *And now who would not desire to have this Omniscient, All-powerful God—this incomprehensible, adorable Being, for a friend;*—to have him for your friend and protector, while here below, and be admitted, hereafter, to his immediate, blissful presence, to be placed where you will not only at once have far more clear and elevated views of the adorable perfections, and works, and ways of God; but where these will be developing and unfolding to your enraptured vision, from age to age, through eternity? What can be so desirable as this? What is there of such vast importance as this? The exist-

ence of the Divine Being will never *end.* You, my hearers, have commenced an existence which is to run parallel in duration with *his.* Of what inconceivable importance is it, then, that you be admitted to enjoy his presence and favor, and to behold his unfolding glories through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

But to this blessedness you can never be admitted unless you become reconciled to God by repentance, submission, love, and new obedience in this probationary life; unless you fall in with the method of reconciliation which he has devised;—believe in, and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ. This done, you cannot fail to be happy in whatever part of the universe you may dwell, for the glorious God is there.

5. *How truly fearful and appalling are the prospects of the unrepenting sinner;* of those who die in a state of impenitence; without holiness,—under the dominion of sin. God's favor and blissful presence they can never experience; hence his frowns must be their sad inheritance. Though permitted to range throughout creation, as they cannot escape his presence, the tokens of his displeasure they must every where meet.

SERMON II.

CHRIST, THE SAVIOUR OF THE LOST.

LUKE XIX. 10.

For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

THESE words were spoken in connection with the conversion of Zaccheus. On a certain occasion, as Christ passed through Jericho, a chief among the publicans had a curiosity to see him, and, to accomplish his purpose, he climbed up into a sycamore tree. When Jesus passed, he noticed him, and directed him to hasten down, for he must abide that day at his house. "And he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully." But this step of our Saviour displeased the people; and they said "that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." By this expression, the Jews betrayed their ignorance, not only of their own hearts, but of the nature of Christ's mission. What though Zaccheus were a sinner, so were they sinners. And what

though Zaccheus had been the chief of sinners, as they supposed, this did not prove that it was improper for Christ to visit him; since, as he soon showed them, to visit sinners for their good, was the great end for which he came into the world. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And the sequel shows that his visit to Zaccheus was not in vain. The fact that he became a disciple seems to be indicated in the Saviour's declaration, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." The passage teaches that Christ came into the world as the Saviour of lost men. In discussing this sentiment it may be proper to show,

I. In what respects men are lost, and,

II. In what way Christ saves them.

I. *I am to show in what respects men are lost.*— The fact that men are in a lost state, is rendered incontrovertible, not only by the declarations which assert it, but by Christ's coming to save them. If God has provided a Saviour for men, then it follows that men need to be saved, or, in other words, are in a lost state. Who would presume to impeach the wisdom of the Almighty by saying that the advent, the sufferings and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ were needless? But do they not say this, who deny,

that man is in a lost state, and unable to save himself? If man can save himself, does he need a Saviour? Whence did angels feel so much interest and joy in announcing to the world the birth of a Saviour, if men are not lost? But the subject will receive further illustration, as I proceed to show in what respects men are lost. 1. *They are transgressors of God's law.* They have broken the reasonable commands of a holy God. Though required supremely to love and serve God, from the first moments in which they are capable of moral action, they have been violating the laws of God all their days. Their sins have increased over their heads, have grown unto the heavens, and have been multiplied beyond man's power of computation.

I know not that it is important to ascertain the precise time when men begin to sin, or when they are capable of moral action. Perhaps it is sufficient for us to know that whenever they begin to put forth moral action, such action as can be compared with a rule of duty, or of right, they begin to sin. And this may be earlier than we suspect. This is thought to be apparent, 1. From the circumstance that nothing is said in the Scriptures of any holy action of sinners previous to their beginning to sin; which leaves us to infer that their first moral acts are sinful. This is apparent, 2. From those declara-

tions of Scripture which represent man as being not only wholly sinful, but sinful from his earliest existence; as being "shapen in iniquity," as "being estranged from his birth," "going astray as soon as he is born, speaking lies," and which declare that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually." The Scriptures further state of both Jews and Gentiles, that they are "all under sin," and that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Now, if all have sinned, then every age has sinned. Every moral agent has transgressed. This is further apparent, as all are subject to death, and death is said to be the consequence of sin. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Now, as every age is subject to death, it would seem that every age sins.

2. *Men are by nature entirely unholy.* They are not merely in a state of guilt, for having committed a few offences, but in a state of entire moral depravity. They are not merely wanting in true love to God, but they possess dispositions inclined to sin; a heart, not only destitute of holy affections, but prone to evil, averse to holiness, and unreconciled to God.

That this is the case with all men by nature, may be gathered from those Scriptures that affirm it,

some of which have been already cited. If men are "shapen in iniquity," "estranged from their birth, speaking lies;" if every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts is evil continually, it would seem that they are wholly evil.

But other Scriptures declare them to be "dead in trespasses and sins;" to be voluntary servants to iniquity, and free from righteousness; that they possess the carnal mind, which is enmity to God, which is not subject to his law, neither, indeed, can be. Hence it is written, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." And the reason is obvious. They are in an unholy state; are enemies to God. "But I know you," said Christ to natural men, "that ye have not the love of God in you." He further says, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." But no reason is assigned why they cannot, but their perverseness. They are unwilling to come. They do not love Christ. They are so strongly inclined to sin that they cannot, or will not be persuaded, without Divine influence, to forsake their sins and embrace the Saviour. On this fact the Saviour seems to rest the necessity of regeneration. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Now, if men are not in a state of entire unholiness, utter moral depravity, and unfitness for heaven, so that it is morally certain

that they will never love God, or become holy of themselves, where is the necessity of their being born of the Spirit? Every one knows that regeneration is not the perfection of holiness. If, then, it be any thing, it must be the commencement of holiness in the heart. It must follow, then, that there is no holiness in men previous to regeneration. Hence they who are holy, who have repented, who love God, are said to be "new creatures," to be "born of God," "created in Christ Jesus unto good works," "quickened," when dead in sins, "saved, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

From all these representations, it appears that man is, by nature, in an unholy state, a state of entire moral depravity and perverseness which utterly unfits him to dwell with God, or enjoy him, and from which he will never, of himself, emerge. He is, therefore, in a lost state.

With the fact before us, that we are thus guilty, and sinful, and lost, it becomes us rather to meditate on our recovery, than to speculate on the origin or cause of our sin and ruin. It is sufficient that we are told that it is, in some way, in consequence of the fall of our first progenitor. God made man upright; but, being mutable, Adam became sinful

He fell from his primitive holiness, in the exercise of the freedom given him, as a moral agent; and in the effects of his fall he involved his posterity. The head and representative of our race being sinful, it was made certain, by Divine constitution, that his posterity would be like him. And so it was. Adam "begat a son in his own likeness." And this, in fact, was to be expected. "Who can bring a clean thing from an unclean? Not one." Hence, men are called "the degenerate plants of a strange vine;" and the Scriptures assert, "that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "For, as, by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." Had Adam remained holy during his time of trial, he being the head of the race, we have reason to believe, his posterity would have been so likewise. We are authorized, then, to say that, in consequence of the fall of our first parents, all our race are found entirely unholy, depraved, and alienated from God; and to be in this state is to be lost.

3. *They are condemned to death for their sins.* They are in a state in which they are, every moment, exposed, and liable to destruction; liable to be cast off by the stroke of justice, and made wretched outcasts from God's favor and presence, for ever.

The sentence of destruction is upon them; and God may justly execute it, at any moment. They are in a perishing state, asthey have no foundation in their own souls for peace, in whatever world they may dwell. Their souls are so disordered by sin that they are like the troubled sea whose waters cast up mire and dirt. They are in a perishing state, inasmuch as they deserve to perish. They have forfeited all favor, merited the displeasure of God, sold themselves into the hands of justice, are children of wrath, and will surely perish if they shall have their deserts.

Finally, *men are unable to effect their own deliverance from sin and ruin.* As to any effectual efforts which they will of themselves be induced to make, their destruction is inevitable. Such being the condition of man, is he not in a lost state?

Having shown in what respects men are lost, I come now to show,

II. *In what way Christ saves them.* Christ came to seek and to save lost men. For this work he was qualified. And he accomplishes it,

1. *As he pardons their sins.* He procures their acquittal from the curse of the law, the sentence of destruction, the claims of justice. This he effects by the atonement he has made for their sins. Having assumed a perfect human nature in union with the

Divine, the person, Christ Jesus, became qualified to suffer. Being, hereby, found in the sinner's place, under the law, the law asserted its claims. He yielded. His obedience was perfect. But more, the law asserted its penal claims. Hence he became obnoxious to the curse, not for his own sin, but for man's sin. He honored the law, both by obeying perfectly its precepts, and by suffering the curse due to transgressors, in whose place he stood. This glorious personage, by surrendering his own life, a ransom, when justice called for the sinner's blood, by bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, has so magnified the law, so honored justice, as to prepare the way for mercy to be exercised in pardoning the penitent. Now Christ, having done this in the capacity of mediator, has, by virtue of his own merit, purchased the prerogative of pardoning the penitent, of acquitting them from the sentence of condemnation, and of justifying them, through virtue of his own perfect righteousness. He becomes their surety, "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Thus Christ saves them from the guilt and the condemnation of sin who repent and believe. And,

2. *He purifies them from sin.* He renders them holy. The work of holiness he begins at regeneration, and carries forward until they are perfectly

freed from sin, and ripe for glory. This he does by his word and Spirit. By his word he teaches men in the things of their peace. By his Spirit he makes his word effectual in opening the eyes of the understanding, convincing the conscience, transforming the will, subduing the heart, and begetting love to God. Thus, in regeneration, he translates souls, not only from darkness to light, but from death to life; quickens them when dead in sins; delivers them from the bondage of Satan; and brings them into the liberty of the sons of God, as he brings them to himself. The same word he makes instrumental, by his Spirit, in carrying out the work of holiness which he begins. He applies the word to their souls for their quickening, spiritual growth, and consolation; keeps them in the faith; works in them to will and to do that which is well pleasing to God; makes them victorious over all their sinful propensities; and makes them more than conquerors over all the enemies of their souls. Thus he subdues them to himself, makes them his willing subjects, disposes them voluntarily to renounce all sin with true contrition, heals all the maladies of their souls, and disposes them to love God with all their hearts. Thus he raises them from the ruins of the fall, and lays a foundation in their hearts for happiness and glory. He saves men, not only from the penal con-

sequences of sin, but from the dominion and pollution of sin, by the effectual working of his Spirit.

3. *He gives them eternal life.* Christ Jesus, in the capacity of mediator, has, by his own merits, purchased a heavenly inheritance for all who love him. By the offering up of himself, without spot, unto God, he has obtained eternal redemption for all who obey him. He "is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him." His own declarations are, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "My sheep hear my voice; and I know them; and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." Thus the Lord Jesus Christ, by his own merits and power, saves lost men, even all who come unto him, from the guilt and punishment of their sins; purifies their natures; and carries them, spotless and pure, to the presence of God, and the glories of heaven.

From the subject let us learn,

1. *What gratitude is due to God for redeeming mercy.* We here see the origin of all the hopes of a ruined world. The mercy of God originated the plan of salvation. This provided the ransom. Had not the eternal God been so moved, by his infinite compassion and mercy for our sinful world, as to give his Son a ransom for us, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life,

our whole lost race had been doomed to wail and weep in eternal exile from God, as the just punishment of their sins. Have any of you, my hearers, just ground for hope, that you shall escape deserved wrath and taste the joys of eternal salvation, you owe it to infinite grace. And, while you cherish a hope so precious, let your breasts glow with the liveliest gratitude to him who "commended his love unto us, in that, while we were yet enemies, Christ died for the ungodly," and who has called you effectually, with a holy calling.

2. *In what high estimation should the Lord Jesus Christ be held by our guilty race.* He is the Saviour of lost men, and their only Saviour. There is salvation in no other. He is the Saviour they need, an all-sufficient Saviour, who, to qualify himself to save the lost, was made perfect through suffering. Christ is highly to be prized. Be cautious against undervaluing Christ, or entertaing derogatory views of him, or listening to those systems which degrade him. For he is the pearl of great price, the chief among ten thousands, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, the Lord our Righteousness. He is altogether lovely. Is it a favor to be rescued from sin and hell, and raised to heaven and eternal glory? Prize, then, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost. Adore his

Divine excellence, which gives such value to his righteousness, such efficacy to his atonement. Prize him as mediator. Prize him for what he is. Prize him for what he has done. Manifest your high estimation of him by surrendering to him, and owning him Lord, by forsaking sin and drawing nigh unto him, by submitting to his righteousness, and embracing his salvation, by denying yourselves and following him, by espousing his cause and seeking his glory. "Count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ."

3. *They who die impenitent are not saved by Christ.* He saves none in their sins. This was not his errand into our world. His name was called Jesus, a Saviour, because he should save his people from their sins. All who are saved by Christ are saved from their sins. They voluntarily repent of their sins, and abandon them. They become holy. They love God. They receive Christ as precious. They are born again: they are new creatures, and walk in newness of life. And it is in this way they prove their union to Christ, and their interest in his salvation. And without this deliverance from sin, none are, or can be saved. Nay, deliverance from sin is an essential part of salvation. They who are not holy, are not saved, and cannot be. "Without

holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Although Christ is able to save, to the uttermost, all who come to him, yet they only are saved who believe. This condition is indispensable. They that believe not in Christ must perish. They have no interest in Christ. They do not become savingly benefited by his advent. Of course, they are as really lost as if no Saviour had been provided, and must as inevitably perish. Dying in their sins, they will be driven away in their wickedness. And, for them who reject Christ, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

4. *How important that men should know their condition.* They must know it in order that they may feel their need of the intervention of Divine mercy, and learn how to value him who came "to seek and to save that which was lost." How dangerous, then, are all those systems and modes of reasoning which lead men to flatter themselves that they are not in a lost state. These all tend to quiet men in their sins, to prevent them from being concerned for the soul, to render them insensible to their need of Christ, and blind them to his inestimable worth. And, as they prevent men from applying to Christ, they lead them on to utter ruin. They

fix upon them that doom from which the Saviour came to deliver them. O sinner, be on your guard here. Be warned of your danger. You are in a lost and perishing state. Will you not believe it? The Saviour has declared it in his word. He has testified to this truth with agonies and blood. In view of such testimony, will you not be convinced that you are in a lost state? Will you be persuaded to the contrary? It is safer to regard the declarations of Christ than the reasonings of carnal men, who have never yet seen the plague of the heart, and are blind to their own character and state. It is safer to regard the declarations of Christ than to follow the feelings of your own carnal mind. O then, be convinced that you are lost. I would not have you needlessly distressed, but distressed, that, in your want, you may apply to the great Physician. I would have you convinced of your lost state that you may suitably prize the Saviour of lost men. I would you were distressed even now, while distress may be availing, rather than wail for ever, with unavailing anguish. You who are impenitent have cause for distress. As you have slighted, abused, and provoked a holy God, you are exposed to his holy wrath and righteous indignation. Even now is the sentence abiding on you. There is cause for

alarm. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." O sinner, trouble is near. Tribulation and anguish are coming. Be anxious to avoid it. Repent. Fly to the Saviour, that you be not irrecoverably, eternally lost. Amen.

SERMON III.

BENEVOLENCE OF THE DIVINE EXPOSTULATIONS WITH SINNERS.

Acts xvi. 28.

Do thyself no harm.

Religion has, in all ages, been calling on men to change their course, to refrain from certain things which they wish to do, and to perform certain things which they are reluctant to perform. Hence there have been laid complaints against the Gospel. It has been charged with imposing upon men unreasonable restraints, and with abridging their liberties. Hence prophets, apostles, and teachers of religion have been considered, by many, as troublers of the people. And individuals, when the claims of religion have been urged upon them, have been displeased, and disposed to say, as did the children of Israel to Moses, when urging them to flee from their state of bondage in Egypt, "Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians." So now, individuals, when

the claims of personal religion are pressed upon them, seem to say, "Why trouble us? Let us alone, that we may live as we please." I feel desirous to show that the Gospel is not to be considered as an unwelcome intruder, as a disturber of man's peace. It comes not to you as an unfriendly visitant: seeking to rob you of that which is truly valuable, or to impose upon you any unreasonable, burdensome or injurious service, or self-denial. It aims not to injure, or wrong any, but, if possible, to prevent all from injuring or wronging themselves. Its aims, tendencies, efforts and expostulations, may be summed up in this: "Do thyself no harm." This is the spirit of true religion, as delineated in the precepts and doctrines of the Gospel; as breathed out in the prayers of the people of God; and as exemplified in the lives of Christians.

See this spirit exhibited by the Apostles, in the case to which my text alludes. Paul and Silas, going forth on their divinely appointed mission, came in contact with a damsel, who was possessed with a spirit of divination; and who brought her masters, or employers, much gain by soothsaying. Paul, being affected in view of her condition, and of the imposition which she and her employers were practising upon the people, rebuked the spirit, and commanded him to come out of her; and immedi-

ately the foul spirit left her. And when her employers saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they were enraged, and caught Paul and Silas, and brought them before the magistrates, saying, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, being Romans." Had they spoken the truth, they would have spoken differently. The true reason of their concern was the failure of their iniquitous gain. But the reason assigned for arresting the Apostles answered their purpose better than the true reason. It enraged the multitude against them. "And the magistrates rent off their clothes from the Apostles and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely; who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." But at midnight they were overheard by the prisoners in the other cells. And what was heard? They were not heard venting execrations against their persecutors for treating them so cruelly and unjustly; they were not heard bemoaning their hard lot, doomed, as they were, to lie upon the cold earth, their stripes undressed, their feet in the stocks; they were not heard wailing under the weight of their sufferings. Instead of this,

they were heard praying and singing praises unto God; praying doubtless for their persecutors and enemies, who were fighting against God. They wished them no harm. "And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and all the doors of the prison were opened; and every one's bonds were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword, and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, Do thyself no harm; for we are all here. Then the keeper called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Why did the Apostles interpose to save the life of the jailer? He being dead, they might have escaped from the prison without molestation.

Here we see the spirit by which the Apostles were actuated, the disinterestedness and benevolence of their religion. They saw a fellow mortal about to thrust himself into eternity by his own hand, un called and unprepared. And they felt more concerned for him, though an enemy, than for them-

selves. They did not cry unto him, do us no harm, but "Do thyself no harm." They were anxious to save his soul from future wrath, regardless of what awaited them as prisoners. Here was the spirit of religion. Here was a spirit of which the jailer knew nothing before. This, together with the extraordinary circumstances of the case, served to produce conviction in his mind, such that, instead of securing them again in their cells, he fell at their feet, with the anxious inquiry, made by every convicted sinner, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And the Apostles preached Christ unto him, made him acquainted with the only Saviour; and he believed on him, and embraced him, and was baptized, and his household, straightway. Now the jailer, rendered humane by the power of religion, washed their stripes, and gave them refreshment. Thus great evil was prevented, and great good secured. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." It labors to prevent men from injuring themselves.

All, who are deviating from the course which virtue dictates, and which leads to present and endless felicity, religion addresses individually, in the language of the text, "Do thyself no harm."

To him who is tempted to commit *suicide*, it says, Abandon your purpose at once. Put away the halter, the poison, or the pistol. "Do thyself no

harm." Do not terminate prematurely your probationary life, short at best, and rush uncalled and unprepared, ere you have done the work for which you were sent into the world, into the presence of your Judge. Do not destroy and involve yourself in the guilt of self-murder. Rather resolve to wait, all the days of your appointed time, till your change come: striving to do with diligence the work assigned you, while probation lasts, that so you may give up your account with joy.

In the same language, religion addresses the *duellist.* Harm not yourself. Put away your rifle. Sheathe your sword. Banish from your heart the spirit of retaliation and revenge, that prompts you to the rash, the murderous step. Lay not your own bosom bare to the fatal ball or sword of your adversary. Take heed how you trifle with existence, and throw away the life which God has so kindly given you. Incur not the guilt of deliberately murdering your brother for a trifling provocation. Neither put your own life thus in the power, and at the disposal of an enraged enemy. Deprive not your family and friends of your society and aid, on which they have a claim, till God shall call you away. Be not chargeable with the folly, guilt, and madness of such a step. Beware of the awful account which the murderer must render. "Do thyself no harm."

Rather become reconciled to your enemy. "Agree with thine adversary quickly." Bury your animosities; and love men as brethren. And above all, be reconciled to God.

And to him who has entered upon any *vicious or immoral course of conduct*, the Gospel comes in kindness, and says, "Do thyself no harm." Proceed not in that course. It is a forbidden, and therefore, a guilty, and dangerous, and deadly course. It will harm you. It leads to destruction. Pursue it not: enter not into it: avoid it: turn from it; and pass away. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." "Now therefore, hearken unto me. For blessed are they that keep my ways." "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom." "I love them that love me; and they that seek me early shall find me." "Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold; yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness; that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance." "Blessed is the man that heareth me: watching daily at my gates." "For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate me love death."

Religion expostulates with the *intemperate man.*

He is displeased with the interference. He considers that he is competent to take care of himself: at liberty to do as he pleases. He charges religion with abridging his privileges, and interrupting his enjoyment, and is offended by her interference. But what is her offence? She simply says to the intemperate man, "Do thyself no harm." "Wine is a mocker. Strong drink is raging: whoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Parley not with an enemy so treacherous. Put not yourself in the power of so deadly a foe. Avoid the course, the consequences of which are so disastrous. Be temperate in all things, and enjoy the happiness which shall result.

Religion has the same benevolent object in pleading with the *rumseller*, to desist from his business. It seeks to prevent his harming himself as much as others. It labors to dissuade him from a course by which he is not only doing immense injury to others, but wronging his own soul. The language of its spirit is, Deal not out that deadly poison by which you rob others of their property, their health, and their reputation, and ruin them for this world, and for the next, besides rendering their families, beyond description, wretched. Incur not the crying guilt

of such a sin, and of producing such an amount of sin and wretchedness in others. Do not, for the sake of gain, be the instrument of destroying so much good, and producing so much evil. Make not yourself, for filthy lucre's sake, a curse to others, a nuisance to society. Harm not yourself by acquiring gain in such a way. Be afraid of gain thus acquired. It will prove a curse to you. It will plant thorns in your dying pillow. It will be a swift witness against you in the day of judgment. Do not so greatly wrong yourself.

And its object and its language are the same when addressing the *oppressor*, who is wrongfully holding his fellow-beings *in bondage* for the sake of gain. He is exceedingly tenacious of what he deems his rights and prerogatives. He is offended by every reproof, expostulation, and entreaty, and by every effort to promote the release of the oppressed. He regards it, as an attempt to rob him of his rights and privileges, or of his property, and to wrong and injure him. Whereas religion comes to him with a benevolent regard for his own good, a concern for him, as wronging and injuring himself. It entreats him not only to desist from wronging others, but to desist from wronging himself. "Do thyself no harm." "Do not involve yourself in the crying sin and guilt of oppressing God's poor, of robbing your

fellow-beings of the rights which God has given them, the dearest rights and privileges that any possess. God says: "All souls are mine." He requires all to know, worship and serve him. The Saviour commands us to give the Gospel to every creature. Incur not the guilt, then, of usurping the Divine prerogatives, and of saying of some of your fellow-beings, These souls are mine: they shall not know and serve God, but shall serve me. They shall not obey the will of their Maker, but shall obey my will. They shall not have the Gospel and the means of salvation, but shall live in ignorance, and be devoted solely to my use and benefit. Do not harm yourself by pursuing a course which will array against you the wrath of Him, who "will judge the poor of the people, and break in pieces the oppressor." Harm not yourself by heaping up treasure derived from the unrequited toil of those who have reaped down your fields; thus causing their cries for redress to enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Wealth thus acquired will prove a curse rather than a blessing. Rather do that which is just and right. Break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you; and thus prove yourself to be one of the children of God, interested in his favor and salvation.

Religion, in the exercise of the same benevolence, expostulates with *young people*. It addresses those, who, having passed the age of childhood, and having inclination for indulgences not granted them, begin to consider themselves better judges than their parents of what it is fitting and proper for them to do. Hence they become strongly inclined to depart from instructions, throw off restraint, and indulge themselves, openly or covertly, in courses which they know are not in accordance with the views and feelings of their parents. If any thing is said to them, by way of advice or reproof, they are offended. Now to a youth of this description, religion comes with the tenderest concern for his good, and entreats him, first of all, "Do thyself no harm." Be not in haste to disregard the instructions and advice of parents, and to throw off parental restraint. There is danger here, for there is sin. Rush not into the world giddy and self-willed, flushed with the idea of your own wisdom and sufficiency to direct your course, and thinking it innocent and safe to go in the way of the multitude, and to do whatever is pleasing in the sight of your eyes, or agreeable to the inclinations of your own heart. "Obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Injure not yourself by disregarding the wholesome advice of those to whom years, experience and grace give wis-

dom, who see your danger, and desire and seek your welfare. By following their counsel it may be well with you; whereas rejection of it may overwhelm you in infamy and ruin. Involve not yourself in the doom of him, "who mocketh at his father and scorneth to obey his mother." Deprive not yourself of that Divine favor, which will rest on him who honors his father and his mother, according to the commandment. Exclude not yourself from the good which will come to those who remember their Creator in the days of their youth, who "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Do not wrong your own soul by depriving it of the blessedness of those who obey the voice of heavenly wisdom, and walk in her delightful paths.

Religion seeks to prevent men, in all circumstances, from wronging themselves by continuing in sin. The *aged*, it entreats not to harm themselves, by delaying repentance and reconciliation to God till the remaining sands of life shall have run out. To those who are *opposed to Divine truth*, the doctrines of the Gospel, and those who preach and defend them, and hence withdraw from the sanctuary, who are opposed to the revival of religion and the prevalence of Gospel principles, opposed to the cause of Christ, to all such religion cries with loud voice, Do yourselves no harm. Take care what you do.

Resist not the grand means of sanctification and salvation which God has appointed. Ruin not yourselves by maintaining the position, and involving yourselves in the guilt of those who will be found fighting against God. Remember that "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." "Serve the Lord with fear." "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

In short, the religion of the Gospel says to all the *impenitent*, of whatever age or condition, Harm not yourselves by refusing or delaying repentance. Fasten not upon yourselves the fearful doom of those who believe not in Christ, and obey not the Gospel: die not in your sins; and be not driven away in your wickedness, to be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." If you harm not yourselves, no man can harm you. Yield, therefore, to the calls of heavenly wisdom, and walk in her paths.

"Believe; and take the promised rest:
Obey; and be for ever blest."

This the spirit of Christianity seeks. It is breathed out in prayer, even for enemies. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," was

the prayer of the benevolent Saviour for his crucifiers. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," prayed the martyr, Stephen, with his dying breath, for his murderers. This spirit was exemplified in the conduct of the Apostles. They spent their lives in labors to prevent men from fatally injuring themselves. It is exemplified in the lives of all true Christians still. They pray and labor to prevent sinners from wronging and ruining their own souls. This is the spirit which prompts and invigorates the missionary enterprise. It carries Bibles to the destitute. It sends heralds of salvation to heathen lands, to entreat them not to wrong and ruin their souls by worshipping gods of wood and stone, but to love and serve the living God, to embrace and follow Christ, and thus secure eternal life. Christianity seeks not the injury of any, but the highest good of all, for time and eternity. They who hate it, hate it, as they do its Author, without cause. They who resist it, know not what they do. Let this spirit be received and obeyed, and men universally, the old and the young, will do themselves no harm, but will seek and secure the highest good for themselves and for others, in this world, and in eternity.

Religion, then, is not an enemy to human happiness. It is the unflinching, unchanging friend of

man. It is the friend of its enemies. It is a better friend to man, infinitely, than he is to himself. Man is bent on his own harm, and will certainly accomplish his own eternal ruin if religion do not prevent. Religion comes to him, uncalled, and entreats him to forbear. If he listens, and obeys her voice, it is well. He is saved from ruin.

SERMON IV.

THE SACREDNESS OF A HOUSE OF WORSHIP.

ECCLESIASTES, v. 1.*

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God.

THE allusion, in this figurative language, is to an individual walking in slippery places, where the utmost care is necessary respecting his steps, lest he should slide and fall, to his injury or destruction.

The passage teaches, that in going into the sanctuary, more than ordinary circumspection is necessary. Men should guard their thoughts and hearts with great vigilance and seriousness, lest they let slip the things they hear, or offer a sacrifice, or develope a character, there, which shall be offensive to God, and dangerous to the soul. As it is with the mind and heart that men converse and walk with God, these should be kept with due vigilance and care whenever we engage in his worship. When men go

* Preached at dedication of the M. H., in 1838.

into the sanctuary, they should, in an especial manner, make straight steps;—should see that their thoughts are fixed on proper objects;—that their hearts are purified from the love of self and sin;—that their desires are holy and their aims single; lest they be found offering the sacrifice of fools, which will be rejected as offensive to God, and ruinous to the soul.

It will not be inappropriate to the present occasion, to contemplate the considerations, which show, that the sanctuary is a sacred place, and that a solemn responsibility rests upon men who attend upon its appropriate services.

I. This is evident from the simple consideration that *it is a place devoted to the worship and honor of Jehovah.* It is the place where the worship and ordinances of God are to be publicly observed; and this according to his own appointment. For the promotion of his worship, and the honor of his own name, he appointed the building of the tabernacle and the temple, and after the temple had been destroyed by the Chaldeans, and Israel had returned from their captivity, God reproved them for delaying to rebuild the temple; and directed them to arise and build the house, without delay, that his worship might be maintained. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house

lie waste? Thus saith the Lord—consider your ways. Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord."

The house of God is, then, the place where God is to be more especially and publicly worshipped, and his ordinances dispensed; and, in this view, is a sacred place. This alone is a reason, why they, who go into the sanctuary, should keep their minds and hearts with great vigilance and care.

II. We arrive at the same view, from the consideration, *that it is the place where the commands and messages of God are more especially dispensed to men.* The sanctuary of the Lord is not the place in which men are to exhibit their own fancies, speculations and inventions, or doctrines at variance with the Gospel. It was never designed for such purposes. If an edifice is erected to be used for these ends, it is not worthy to be called the house of God; and its dedication to him would be but solemn mockery. Its tendency would be to dishonor God, subvert the Gospel, and lead souls to ruin.

The sanctuary is the Divinely appointed place for exhibiting to man the declarations and instructions of the great Jehovah; for inculcating those revealed doctrines of his Word, which disclose the perfection, the worthiness, the claims, and the will

of God; which make known the character and state, the duty and safety of fallen man, as a sinner against God, guilty and condemned to endless death; which call him to repentance and the abandonment of sin; which direct him to the atoning Lamb, the Lord our righteousness, as the only name given under heaven among men whereby he can be saved;—doctrines, which disclose the riches of the Divine wisdom and mercy in the wonderful method of salvation by the incarnation and atoning sufferings of God the Son, who has purchased eternal redemption. It is the place appointed for exhibiting the principles and precepts, the invitations, offers, promises, warnings and threatenings of the Gospel;—truths proclaiming that it shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the sinner;—truths designed and adapted to instruct the mind, convince the conscience, transform the soul, and make man a new creature. These truths, though by carnal minds derided, and denominated foolishness, are yet declared and proved to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

That the sanctuary is the place where are to be exhibited the messages of God, and not the inventions of man, is plain from the Divine direction to him who is appointed to minister in the house of

God. "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel. Therefore thou shalt hear the Word at my mouth, and shalt give them warning from me." "Speak unto them all that I command thee. Diminish not a word. Be not afraid of their faces, lest I confound thee before them."

The true ministers of the Gospel are ambassadors for Christ, sent, not to detail their own fancies and speculations, but to declare the messages of their Lord; to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; to labor, not to please men, but to convince them of sin, and persuade them to be reconciled to God. They are appointed to watch for souls, as they that must give account; they are stewards of the mysteries of God. The command of Christ is: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

The man of God is to study to show himself "approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; rightly dividing the word of truth." Hence an apostle, in discharging his high commission, determined not to know, or make known, any thing, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He labored indefatigably to win souls to Christ. He warned them, night and day, with tears. "Know-

ing the terror of the Lord," he says, "we persuade men." "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Surely the Scriptures show that the house of God is designed to be sacred to the exhibition of Divine truth; the Gospel of Christ; the messages of God to guilty men. It is not wonderful, therefore, that it should be enjoined on men, in going to the house of God, to take heed to their steps, to keep, with great vigilance and care, their minds and hearts; to take heed not only how, but what they hear.

III. *The house of God is the place where God meets his people, receives their worship, hears their prayers, communicates with, and blesses them.* So it was in ancient times. In the tabernacle, and in the temple, God gave visible tokens of his presence. There he was known to be accessible to his people, when help was needed. When his people resorted to the sanctuary to seek God, they expected to meet him there. And there they did meet him, and experience his presence and aid. Of this, the Psalmist had rich experience. Hence, in praying for one in trouble, he said: "The Lord send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion." And, when banished a while from the sanctuary, his heart panted after God. "My soul thirsteth for

thee, to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." On account of his happy experience of the Divine presence in the sanctuary, he thus expresses his ardent attachment to the place: "One thing have I desired of the Lord: that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

And, though under the Gospel dispensation, there is less of the visible in religion than anciently, yet there is no less of reality; and we have no less assurance now than had the ancient church, that God is present with his people still, and fills his sanctuary with his glory. Still, when his people resort to him aright, in the place where his honor dwelleth, they will find gracious answers to their prayers, comforting manifestations of his presence, and all needed help. Where is Jehovah's dwelling on earth; where is the place of his honor, if not in the sanctuary?—the place where he is publicly acknowledged and worshipped; where his own blessed truth and Gospel are dispensed; where his own ordinances are administered; where his covenant is entered into, and its engagements sealed; and where the united prayers and praises of his covenant people are offered? There, still, his presence dwells; there,

still, his people may expect to meet him; there, still, they do find him; there the tokens of his presence are often felt, and always, when they are sought aright. Often, the mental eye of his people sees his glory in the sanctuary. Nay, often, the effects of his presence are visible to the eye of sense.

Often, the power of the Holy Spirit is manifest in the house of prayer, accompanying Divine truth to the conscience; moving upon the minds of men; convincing them of sin; producing contrition; subduing and transforming their hearts; bringing them out of darkness into light, from death unto life; and putting a new song into their mouth, even praise unto God. Often are his people greatly refreshed and comforted, and strengthened for their warfare, while waiting upon God in his house.

And is not that a sacred place where God deigns to dwell, meet his people, receive their worship, hear their prayers, accept their praises, commune with their spirits, and refresh their souls; thus giving them strength for their journey? and where he translates souls from death to life? Then it concerns men to take heed to their thoughts and their hearts when they go to the house of God.

IV. The sacredness of the house of God, and the responsibility of those who resort to it, are further obvious from the consideration that *the place is*

peculiarly under the inspection of the holy, heart-searching God. The eyes of the Lord are indeed in every place, beholding the evil and the good. But, with a more special scrutiny, does he inspect the place where his honor dwells; where he makes his gracious overtures to men; and where they profess to worship him and take his covenant into their mouth. He indeed takes notice of those who neglect the sanctuary, and do not frequent the house of God; and he takes notice also of the reasons why they do not; and will bring every work of theirs into judgment. But no less vigilantly does he take cognizance of those who resort to his house. He takes particular cognizance of those who go into his house as ambassadors, spiritual guides. He notices with what views and motives they have assumed the holy office and entered on their work;—whether from love of truth, or love of something which is at variance with the truth; whether they are seeking the glory of God, the advancement of truth and holiness, and the sanctification and salvation of men, or a private interest; whether they strive to obey and please God, or labor to please men. He notices whether they preach the truth, or their own inventions; with what motives they labor, and what ends they seek; and he will bring all into judgment, and reward them accordingly. He takes notice, also, of

those who go to his house as hearers; with what motives they are influenced in going, and how they demean themselves in the house of God; whether they are light, and frivolous and vain, or serious, attentive and devout; whether they are merely formal worshippers, or worship him in spirit and in truth. If Divine truth is exhibited, he notices who are pleased with it, and receive it in love; and who are displeased, and reject it. If doctrines are exhibited which are at variance with the true Gospel of Christ, he sees who are pleased with the exhibition, and whose hearts are made sad. He notices, and with approbation too, all the holy motives, sincere aims, pious desires, secret tears and fervent prayers of his true children and worshippers; and will remember them for good. And he notices also, with displeasure, all the heartlessness and hypocrisy of the pretended worshipper; of those who have not the love of God in them; and he will record it against them. Hear his own declaration: "And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." And now is that eye, which pierces through all disguises, directly and emphatically fixed upon every soul that enters the house of God, scanning all his emotions, with a view to the judgment; surely then, it concerns him

who enters there, either as preacher or hearer, to keep his mind and heart with great vigilance and care; for it is a place of awful responsibility. "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." God watches, with a jealous eye, the place where his honor dwells; and he will hold men accountable for the manner in which they treat it, and for their feelings in relation to it. "He will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

V. I name one other consideration, showing that the sanctuary is a solemn place. *It will be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, to those who attend upon it.* As it is a place where are wielded the grand appointed means of salvation,—where the Gospel is preached,—where men are instructed in the things which belong to their peace, they either repent and become wise unto salvation, or incur the guilt of hearing and rejecting the messages of God, the offers of a Saviour; and thus bring upon themselves an aggravated destruction. In such circumstances none can remain stationary. They grow better, or grow worse, according as they keep their hearts and minds, or treat the truths and messages of God. If they listen to, receive, and obey the messages of God, the holy doctrines of the Gospel, repent, submit to God, and follow Christ, they

develope the character of children of God, and show that they are becoming meet for heaven. If they disregard, disobey, and reject the messages of God's grace, refuse to repent and submit to Christ, they become hardened in sin, augment their guilt, and show that they are ripening for an aggravated destruction. To one or the other of these destinies are all tending, who enjoy the divinely appointed and appropriate privileges of the sanctuary. An apostle, alluding to these different results, said: "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" Who is sufficient to bear such responsibility, to dispense truths and bear privileges to men, which will have such a bearing upon their eternal destinies, according as they treat them now? Surely it concerns them, who preach or hear the Gospel, who tread the courts of the Lord, or have opportunity to do it, to guard well their steps, to take heed to their thoughts and hearts. The place is rendered solemn in consideration of the momentous results which will follow from attending upon its privileges. When these are properly received, they will save the soul. When they are abused, they render eternal death far more deadly.

This Christ himself teaches: "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for you."

Such, then, being the sanctuary of God, there are good reasons why, in going to it, we should be cautious to keep our steps. It is a place sacred to the worship and honor of Jehovah; a place where his truths and messages are especially dispensed to men; where he meets, communes with, and blesses his people; the place which is emphatically under his constant inspection, and which has an immense bearing, for good or ill, upon the eternal destinies of men. Men should take heed to their steps, whether they enter this sacred place as professed ambassadors of the Lord, or as hearers of the Word; lest the former be found exhibiting their own speculations and inventions for the truth of God, offering strange fire upon the altar of the Lord, deceiving souls to their ruin, involving themselves in the awful guilt and curse of betraying their sacred trust;—or the latter, while pretending to be the worshippers of the Lord, be seen, by the Searcher of hearts, to be destitute of love to him, and influenced by unworthy motives, and be found offering the sacrifice of fools, which will be neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to themselves.

Several reflections are suggested by this subject.

1. We learn, that to build the house of God and give attendance at the sanctuary, merely, is not sufficient to secure the approbation of heaven, or the salvation of the soul. Men may do this, and yet withhold their hearts. They may go to the house of God from very unworthy motives. It may be to gratify curiosity, to hear some display of human eloquence, to witness some rhetorical flourish, to listen to some moving appeal to the passions. Or it may be, perhaps, to hear the holy, humbling, transforming doctrines of the Gospel cried down, mutilated or explained away; and to listen to something, in their stead, more congenial to the natural heart—doctrines, which quiet anxiety about the future, which deny the necessity of a painful conviction of sin, and of repentance, of regeneration, and earnest striving to enter into life. Or, they may do it to pacify conscience, thinking that the giving of their attendance upon the services of the sanctuary will amount to a righteousness which will procure acceptance with God and the salvation of their souls; though they withhold from God their hearts. But more than this, we are shown, is requisite to secure acceptance with God and eternal life. We must wait upon God in his house with proper feelings and motives, with an eye to his glory, with delight in his worship, with faith in his declarations, and a reliance on

Christ; with a desire to hear, receive, and obey his truth, and be conformed to his will. We must obey the Gospel, and become the true, spiritual worshippers of God, if we would secure his favor and obtain eternal life.

2. What cause have we for thankfulness and praise that the holy Sovereign of the universe deigns to have a dwelling-place on earth. That the incomprehensible God, who is so devoutly adored by the glorious hosts of heaven, should condescend to accept, and fix an abode among the sinful children of men, where he may be met and worshipped; where his presence may be enjoyed, and his grace and help obtained. From this interesting fact we derive our encouragement, and from it results our duty to build the house of God, and consecrate it to him, and there to meet him, and there wait on him as a present God, as a covenant God, reconciled in Christ to them who believe. A belief of this fact has led to the recent changes in this house of worship, by which it is rendered more commodious, comfortable and pleasant, with the understanding that it is to be appropriated exclusively to the worship of God and the purposes of religion; and, through the Divine blessing on the efforts made, the building is so far completed as to be ready to be consecrated to him, in honor of whom it has been erected.

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have built." Yes, God deigns to dwell on earth, and accept the abode prepared, in accordance with his direction, for the honor of his name. Then let us bring and offer this house to him, which has been erected for the honor of his worship. Long have we experienced inconvenience from want of a stated, commodious, comfortable place of worship. And having provided this, let us give it up to him in hope that he will accept it, and deign to dwell in it, and make it the birth-place of many souls. We know not its destiny, nor how it may affect the destinies of men. It may be destroyed: it may be defiled and perverted. Instead of being the gate of heaven, it may become a broad highway to perdition. We cannot keep it. We shall not live to guard it. We would, then, commend it to him who is able to preserve it, and make it the birth-place of souls for many generations.

And now, my brethren, we are here, before God, for a solemn, joyful purpose. Not only are angels witnesses to our doings; but the eye of him, who searches the reins and the heart, is upon us. He requires more than an external offering. Let us then, first, renew the consecration of ourselves and

our children to him; and remembering that if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear, let us banish every improper feeling from our breasts, and with united hearts and prayers, consecrate this house to God.

Eternal Jehovah! Possessor of the universe, who hast a glorious residence in the heaven of heavens, thou hast no need of earthly temples; but we have need of them, and we need thy presence in them. This house built with hands, for thy worship and honor, we now bring, and dedicate to thee.

God, the Son! Atoning Lamb! Saviour of the lost! we dedicate it to thee.

Spirit of holiness! Sanctifier of the soul! we devote this house to thee.

Adorable Trinity! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! to thee we consecrate this pulpit. May it never be desecrated by the inculcation of instructions which shall cause men to err from the right ways of the Lord. May it ever be sacred to the exhibition of those holy, unadulterated doctrines of the Gospel, which are mighty, through thy power, to transform and save the soul.

To thee we consecrate this sacramental altar. Let it be a place where the gracious Redeemer will ever meet, commune with, forgive, refresh, and bless his believing friends, whenever they shall seek him here.

To thee we consecrate these seats. May they be filled with those who shall reverence thy name, heed thy truth, and by it become spiritual worshippers, and thus wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.

That orchestra we dedicate to thee. There may the performers of sacred song offer acceptable melody to God, and become prepared, in long succession, to sing thy praise in nobler strains in the bright world above.

The vestry below, these walls, this whole edifice, so far as pertains to a place of worship, God of Redemption! we devote to thee. To thee, to thy worship and honor, to the dispensation of thine own blessed truth and ordinances, we solemnly dedicate this temple, made with hands.

"O Thou, that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." Accept, we beseech thee, this offering at our hands. Here let thy presence dwell, thy power be manifested, thy name be glorious. Here may thy favor and the blessing of thy grace be acceptably sought, and largely partaken by us in our earthly pilgrimage. Here may our children, and children's children, down to distant generations, be taught the whole character and counsel of God, be emancipated from sin, and made meet for heaven.

Lamb of God! Saviour of sinners! Author of

eternal redemption for all who obey thee! here let thy atoning blood be effectually applied for the redemption and forgiveness of many a lost and perishing sinner.

Spirit of grace! let thy presence and power be gloriously visible here, in wielding the truth, which is thy own sword, convincing the consciences, subduing the hearts, and transforming the souls of unnumbered multitudes, and in sanctifying them for heaven.

God of our salvation! may we of this dying assembly, and they who shall come after us, be so beneficially affected, and effectually blest by thy residence in thine earthly courts, that after we shall have passed off, in successive generations, from this stage of action; after earthly temples shall be demolished, and the earth itself shall be dissolved; we may be gathered into thy glorious temple above, prepared to join the bright and blessed hosts of heaven in rendering nobler worship, adoration and praise to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, through endless ages. Amen.

SERMON V.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SERVING GOD AND MAMMON.

MAT. VI. 24.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

MAMMON is a Syriac word, which signifies gain. It more especially denotes riches. But it may denote whatever else of a worldly nature we consider gain to us; as honors, preferments, worldly applause, pleasures, ease, the indulgence of the appetites; all objects of a worldly nature, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and pride of life. These are mammon. To seek any of these objects, as one's chief good, is to serve mammon. The word appears to be used as the name of an idol. So we find the covetous, the inordinate lover of riches denominated an idolater. He is a devotee of mammon. These objects are here personified under this name, and represented as the master which some men serve. It is extremely obvious that many regard mammon, in some of its forms, as their chief good, and seek

it as constituting their chief enjoyment. They devote to mammon their minds and hearts and hands. But the Saviour here shows us, that they who do so are not the servants of God.

"No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. *Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*" We have here a position strongly asserted. The Saviour does not say ye should not, but ye cannot, serve God and mammon. Two or three considerations will demonstrate the truth of this position.

1. *These masters prefer opposite claims.* A servant may follow two masters, as long as they keep together. But if they part, and proceed in opposite directions, he can follow but one of them. God and mammon have claims so opposite, that no one can yield obedience to both. God claims the heart. He requires that men fix their affections on him, and regard him as their Supreme Good. Mammon also, claims the heart. He requires that his servants should place their affections on him, regard him as their chief good. God requires that men should lay up their treasure in heaven; seek the things which are above. Mammon says, No, lay up your treasure on earth; seek the things which are below; the things of the world. God demands that our minds and our

hands, our time and attention, be all employed in subserviency to him and his glory. Mammon demands that these all be devoted to him.

God commands us to deny ourselves and mortify our perverse carnal inclinations. But mammon says, No, gratify these inclinations. Walk in the sight of your eyes, follow the desires of your own hearts. Do the things you wish.

God directs us to moderate our wishes, and be content with such things as we have. But the direction of mammon is, Grasp at all you see. Strive for all you crave. God directs us to maintain honesty, sobriety and integrity at all times. Mammon says, Be not over scrupulous in respect to these things; especially if they are in your way. If you can accomplish your purpose better, dispense with them. At any rate accomplish your object.

God commands us to observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy. But mammon says, Be not particular. We read, the Sabbath was made for man. Make it subservient to your own ease, convenience, or worldly interest. The Divine directions are, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." "Now is the accepted time." "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." But the suggestions of mammon are, Seek first the world. Secure

a temporal good. And to religion it says, when pressing its claims for attention, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." The Divine direction is, honor the Lord with thy substance; impart a portion for the support and spread of the gospel, and Christian institutions, and for benevolent and charitable purposes. But mammon says, keep what you have; get what you can; lay up. Waste nothing by giving for the spread of the gospel. Throw nothing away for such a purpose. "To what purpose is this waste?"

God requires us to live to him, to seek his interest and glory in all we do. No, mammon says, seek your own honor and interest, ease and pleasure; live to yourselves. You are your own.

Thus these two masters make such opposite claims, that no one can yield to both. Whoever obeys the will of God, and is devoted to his service, will, and must run counter to the claims and principles of mammon; and whoever devotes himself to mammon—seeks, as his chief good, these worldly things and that gratification of self—does, and must run counter to the commands of God; and refuses his claims.

No man can serve God and mammon, because,

2. *Both cannot be served with the same class of feelings, with the same character.* The feelings and.

character necessary to serve the one are in opposition to the feelings and character requisite to serve the other. As God is a holy Being, to serve him, one must have holy affections and dispositions; must be spiritually minded; must possess a holy character. He must love prayer and communion with God; and love the diligent performance of the holy duties of religion. Now these holy spiritual affections and feelings are not possessed by the devotee of mammon.

He is not inured to prayer and communion with God, nor accustomed to practise the self-denying, holy course of conduct which God requires, because he loves it. His feelings are selfish, sensual, worldly. He is carnally minded, and is devoted to the things of the flesh. Hence he is not prepared to serve a holy God; and cannot be, while serving mammon, an object so opposite in its nature. So it was said to Israel, when they had fallen into the practice of idolatry, "Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God." They could not serve him with their idolatrous hearts and wicked hands. They must cleanse themselves from sin;—must abandon, with hatred, the service of idols, before they could serve a holy God. So on the other hand, as mammon is an unholy object, as it requires and enlists unholy affections only, and feelings which are carnal, and selfish, and worldly, the holy servants of God are

not prepared to serve in his cause. They have not the qualifications requisite to be the devoted servants of mammon, an object so opposite in its nature to the God whom they love.

To serve mammon in the sense of the text, supposes a love for these carnal, worldly objects, which will lead one to regard them as his chief good;—the source of his highest enjoyment. Such an one is therefore disqualified for the enjoyment of God, as he has no love for holy objects. The character of God, and all those things which God requires, will then be repugnant to his feelings. So the devoted servant of God, finding his chief delight in the object he serves, and in the course he pursues, is disqualified for enjoying the opposite course, the things of mammon. To these things his feelings are averse. These two objects must have, each, followers like itself. And as they are opposite in their character, so their followers must be opposite in theirs; so opposite that both cannot serve the same object; and no more can one serve both objects. He will either love the one, and hate the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." But,

3. *The position is confirmed by other Scriptures.* It is according to the tenor of Scripture, that carnal, worldly minded, selfish men, are not the servant

of God; and that before they can serve God acceptably, they must renounce carnal objects and an unholy course of conduct, which is, to renounce the *service* of mammon. It is obvious that among those who serve mammon, in the sense of the text, are they who love the world supremely. Such, the apostle teaches, are not the servants of God. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

"For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Here we are shown that he that doeth the will of God, and he that loves the world, are opposite characters,—are not serving the same master. It is no less obvious, that to serve mammon is to be carnally minded, and to mind the things of the flesh. But it is written, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "The carnal mind is enmity against God; is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." What can be plainer than this, that no carnal, worldly-minded man can serve God acceptably? If the Scriptures are to control our convictions, we must regard it as for ever settled, that before a man can serve a holy God, he must abandon his present feelings and course, and become a new man.

4. *Do not facts illustrate and confirm this sentiment?*

Look at your neighbor, or at that man, whoever he may be, who is serving mammon; pursuing the gratification of his sensual nature; manifestly devoted to the world as his chief good; regarding it as the source of his highest enjoyment;—and what is your conviction? Is he prepared to serve God? Does he manifest any feelings which are in unison with the holy service of God? Is he prepared, think you, to find delight in prayer and meditation, and in the self-denying, holy duties, which God requires? Does he take pleasure in the religious duties of the closet, the family, and the sanctuary? Does he find time and disposition to observe them punctually? Is he ready to aid the cause of Christ and the gospel by his efforts and substance? Or rather, is it not too apparent that the feelings of his heart are averse to all these objects; that he is far from being prepared to yield to the claims of Jehovah? Does he not manifest, that with the feelings he now has, and the course he is now pursuing, he cannot engage in or enjoy the spiritual service of God; and that he cannot serve God so long as he is devoted to an object so contrary to God in its nature and claims, as that which he is supremely seeking? And does not the assertion of the Saviour here receive con-

firmation, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." True, a servant of God may possess wealth, and seek it, and value it, innocently. For he may make it subservient to the cause of Christ. He may employ it in doing good. He may, as all are required to do, use the world, as not abusing it; but he cannot make religion, or the service of God, subservient to the cause of the world, and yet be a servant of the Lord; he cannot serve God and mammon.

From this subject we may infer,

I. *That they, who are not the true servants of God, are his enemies.* God and mammon, or Christ and the world, constitute the two grand interests which enlist all men. And as none can serve both, he that is not on the Lord's side, a true servant of God, is a devotee of the world, a servant of mammon. He is serving that interest which is opposed to God; of course is an enemy of God. The case admits of no neutrality. As these interests are opposed to each other, he that is found in the interest of mammon, is opposed to God. As Christ has said, "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." The thought is alarming, but cannot be evaded. Many, doubtless, are reluctant to admit it. They will admit that they are not the true servants of God, and disciples of Christ; but are slow to admit that they

can be enemies. They claim a neutral standing. But this claim they must relinquish; as no neutral character is admitted by our subject, no such is admitted by Christ. O think of this. Are you then an enemy of God? Surely you are, if you are not his cordial friend and servant. And have you considered your position? Are you duly aware of the stand you have taken? An enemy of the infinite God, who can crush a thousand worlds to atoms in a moment, and blot out the universe at once! And do you think of maintaining yourself in this position? O tremble for the result. Think how unequal the contest. Tremble and submit, lest his strong arm crush and ruin you for ever. O abandon your ground, without delay. Throw down the weapons of your rebellion, and fly to the atoning Lamb for pardon and safety.

II. *The servants of God, and the servants of the world, are going to eternity with very different prospects.* The courses they are pursuing are so opposite, that they must lead to very different results. The feelings and course of conduct to which mammon inures his followers, are such as utterly to unfit them to mingle with the servants of God in the coming world; and must effectually disqualify them for participating in the same employments and enjoyments.

The children of God, by serving a holy Being, become conformed to the Divine will, and prepared for the society and bliss of heaven. Their course not only includes the conditions of life, but at every step is furthering their preparation for the holy service and enjoyments of the heavenly state. Whereas the course pursued by the votaries of mammon, not only excludes a compliance with the conditions of pardon; not only accumulates a fearful mass of guilt, but is leading the soul farther and farther from God,—strengthening impenitence and love of sin, a disrelish for holy objects, and a relish for carnal things; inuring the soul to the practice of sin, and disqualifying it more and more, at every step, for the service or the enjoyment of a holy heaven.

Now, can it be, that men, whose character and conduct are so opposite in this life, are destined to the same state hereafter? No, it cannot be. It is impossible. Reason teaches that it cannot be;—but that they who are so opposite in their character, must be consigned to different conditions in the world to come. They cannot enjoy the same condition. The objects and employments which will give delight to one class, would give pain to the other. Reason teaches that they must be separated, and placed in conditions as widely different, as their characters are opposite. It is clear to the eye of

reason, that the course which the true servant of God pursues, the character he possesses, and the feelings which he cherishes, will qualify him for the enjoyment of God hereafter. This is the object he supremely seeks. And this object, the Scriptures assure us, he will obtain. And it is equally clear, that the course, the character and feelings of the servant of mammon, do unfit him for the enjoyment of God and heaven. These are not the objects he is seeking. Then, will not reason say, that to a holy heaven he cannot be admitted? and that if admitted there he could not be happy? Hence, it will not be unjust, nor unreasonable, for Christ, in the day of reckoning, to separate them from the servants of God, and appoint them to regions of darkness and woe, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. It will be but giving them the fruit of their doings. They sought a perishable portion, and it fails them: and the consequence, though ruinous, is not unjust. As they sowed to the flesh, they must, of necessity, reap corruption. Hence, an apostle warns men of their danger. "Be not deceived. God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." And the Lord, in faithfulness, directs his prophet to sound the alarm. "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe

unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous, into life eternal."

III. Finally, *my hearers, permit the inquiry, Are you serving God, or are you serving mammon?* It becomes you to put this inquiry to yourselves. As there is no neutrality, it concerns us to know what master we are serving, one or the other; and as God and mammon are so opposite in their character and claims, and in the rewards they bestow, it concerns us, not only to know which master we are serving, but to see that we have made the judicious choice. And now, do any hesitate in coming to a decision respecting the question, to whose service they will be permanently devoted? Is it a matter of comparative indifference with any? Is there no ground for choice? And have you no preference? Which master has the most reasonable claims upon your service? Which is the most worthy? Whose service best becomes reasonable and accountable beings, the holy service of God, or the carnal worship of mammon? Which will best bear reflection? Which service will lead to the best results? Which master will bestow the best reward? Whose servants are the most useful and happy in life, and composed and tranquil in the hour of death?

whose will be safest in the day of judgment? Whose servants will have the best foundation for happiness, when this world shall pass away; when not only riches and pleasures, yea, all the objects that constitute the worldling's god, shall perish; but when the world itself shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat? Whose servants will have the most durable portion? whose have the animating assurance of being admitted to eternal mansions of bliss? and whose, the appalling certainty, that the regions of darkness and despair will be their everlasting habitation? Draw the comparison. Make a due estimate. Count the cost, and choose ye whom ye will serve. Make the wise choice. Make that choice which will furnish no occasion for regret, ages after this world shall be no more!

SERMON VI.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE CROSS.

GALATIANS VI. 14.

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

No attentive reader of the epistles of Paul can fail to notice the peculiar stress which the apostle lays upon the cross of Christ. He mentions it with a frequency and an emphasis, which show it to have been, not only the grand theme of his preaching, but an object of his ardent love, and the only ground of his hopes of salvation. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." "For Christ sent me, not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is, to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." "For I determined not to know any thing among

you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." While others gloried in their conformity to the Mosaic law, and zeal in the observance of external rites and religious duties, or in their learning, wealth, or accomplishments, he would glory only in the cross of Christ. The thought of glorying in any thing else was revolting to his feelings. And yet, if any man might glory in his own attainments, surely Paul might. Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, he was versed in all the learning of the Jews, and was not unskilled in that of the Greeks. Yet, so far from glorying in this, he sought rather to avoid a show of learning, while preaching the gospel, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Every distinction appertaining to the Jews' religion, he could pre-eminently claim. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more. Circumcised the eighth day; of the stock of Israel; of the tribe of Benjamin; an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord."

Many and great were the toils, the privations, the perils, the persecutions, and the sufferings to which he was subjected, while preaching the gospel. These he cheerfully endured, for the sake of Christ. "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake." Thus renouncing all trust and dependence on those things on which the men of the world dote, and of which they boast, the great apostle gloried only in the cross of Christ.

But what is there in the cross of Christ that furnishes just ground for glorying? The phrase is used figuratively, to denote the crucifixion of Christ; and it is to be understood, as denoting, beyond Christ's death, the effects of his death, and as including the great truths and doctrines involved and implied in the sufferings and death of Christ for sinful men. It is then a comprehensive phrase, importing those great truths and doctrines which appertain to the salvation of lost and guilty men, through the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, which are able to make men wise unto salvation. These doctrines relate to the character and work of Christ, to the character and state of fallen man, the claims of God, and the conditions of salva-

tion. These were the truths which Paul exhibited, when preaching the cross to Jews and Greeks.

In the comprehensive doctrine of the cross is the glorious truth, that the Son of God has made an atonement for the sins of the world.

We are shown in the Scriptures that he is the Son of God; the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person; and he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; that he was the eternal Word, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God; that he was made flesh, and dwelt among us; that, having assumed a human nature in union with his divine, "and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He was sinless; yet, standing in the place of sinners, as mediator, under the law which had been transgressed by us, he was obnoxious to its penalty, our iniquities being laid on him. Hence he fell a victim to incensed justice, as our substitute. He gave his life a ransom for ours, and thus became "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The obedience, sufferings, and death of this adorable personage, in the place of man, has magnified the law, and made it honorable, and has hence opened the way for God to be just, and yet bestow pardon and salvation on penitent offenders.

This doctrine of the atonement for the sins of men by the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the grand pillar, on which Christianity rests. Remove this, and the whole fabric falls to the ground. Nullify this, and you take away the last hope of a guilty, perishing world. Annihilate this, and you annihilate the only name under heaven, given among men, whereby a sinner can be saved.

Has the Son of God subjected himself to the excruciating death of crucifixion to atone for the sins of men, and to redeem them from the penalty of the violated law? *Then, another truth imported by the cross is, that mankind are in a state of guilt and condemnation.* They have destroyed themselves, are in a self-ruined, lost, and perishing condition, utterly unable to relieve themselves. If it were not so, there would have been no need of the cross, no necessity for the incarnation, sufferings, and death of the glorious Son of God. So lost were they, such was their ruin, we are shown by the cross, that no other than a personage of infinite dignity and worthiness could atone for their sins; no other than an Almighty Redeemer could ransom them from the claims of justice, and deliver them from the fearful penalty of the broken law.

And we further see, in the cross of Christ, as

preached by the apostle, that mankind are not merely in a state of condemnation, for having transgressed Jehovah's law once, or in a few instances; but they are in a sinful state, a state of entire moral depravity, are dead in trespasses and sins, under the dominion of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God. The plan of salvation through the atonement of Christ, is based on the fact that the human race is in a state of utter ruin. "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."

Further, the doctrine of regeneration is also included in the preaching of the cross.

The great object of Christ's atoning death was to rescue men from sin and condemnation, and raise them to holiness and eternal life. But as they are dead in trespasses and sins, devoid of holiness, they must be renewed to holiness, raised to spiritual life, delivered from sin's dominion, or they cannot be saved. The necessity of this is taught by the Saviour: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And the apostle, in preaching the cross, taught the same. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "And you hath he quickened, who were dead." "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." "If any man be in Christ," interested in his redemption, "he is a new creature." "According to his mercy, he

saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Christ Jesus, the Saviour."

The doctrine of the cross involves the fact of *the necessity of repentance.* The sinner must hate and forsake his sins, or, notwithstanding the atonement by Christ's death, he will be excluded from the kingdom of God. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." It includes, also, the doctrine of the *necessity of faith in Christ.* With a sense of his lost condition, and a conviction of utter unworthiness and helplessness, he must give up the soul to God, with simple reliance on the merits of Jesus Christ. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned."

Another great truth, involved in the doctrine of the cross, is that of justification by grace, through faith in Christ. That sinful man, who is exposed to death eternal, and deserving of it, can, by repenting and believing, be pardoned and justified before God, is a fact, that rests entirely on the atoning sufferings and meritorious death of Christ. Nothing but the atonement of Christ opens the way for the sinner's pardon, renders his forgiveness consistent, or his justification possible. It is a privilege which

comes from his righteousness alone. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "He is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." Believers are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth, to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood."

Here was the grand theme of the apostle's preaching. He made annunciation of a new and glorious way of salvation for lost men, through the righteousness and blood of Christ. He preached that, because Christ, by his sufferings on the cross, has vindicated justice, and honored the law, God can, and does, offer pardon to rebels. The reconciliation of man with his Maker comes only through virtue of the cross. It is God in Christ, who is "reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." This is the ground on which mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. Seeing God could be just, and yet justify the penitent believer, angels, filled with joy, hasted to bring the tidings to earth, shouting, as they flew, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will to men."

The sovereignty of the divine mercy in the conversion, sanctification, and salvation of men, is also involved and implied in the doctrine of the cross of Christ. This the apostle clearly exhibited in preaching Christ crucified. In the cross of Christ we see that the salvation of any of our fallen race is all of God, and all of grace; that the prerogative of healing and saving any was purchased by atoning blood, by the meritorious death of the Son of God; that it is with God, as his rightful prerogative, to have mercy on whom he will have mercy; that, as sinners contributed nothing to the atonement, they can have no claim to mercy or favor, on account of it. The atonement does not alter their natural character, nor lessen their ill desert. Their character remains the same, as though no atonement had been made, and will so remain, unless God, of his own will, or sovereign goodness, interpose and change them, make them trophies of his grace. This, God is under no obligation to do for any; for all have sinned, and are justly condemned, and deserve to perish, as all must and would, if left of God; in which case, the sufferings and death of Christ would have been fruitless and unavailing. That all would continue in their naturally chosen course, overlook the cross, reject Christ, and neglect his salvation, if left to themselves, is abundantly evident, both from the

apostle's preaching, and from facts. Their unwillingness to serve God is such that the Saviour complained, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Nay, he further said, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." Coming to Christ implies a willingness to come to him; and no man can come unwillingly. It must be a voluntary surrender, or there is no coming at all. But, as all are naturally unwilling, their unwillingness will prevent their coming to Christ, so long as it continues. Unless it is subdued and removed, no sinner will be found submitting to Christ, and embracing him. But this unwillingness is such, that no sinner will, of himself, remove it. It is the disposition which he voluntarily cherishes and loves. Hence, unless God interpose and subdue this perverseness, and dispose the sinner to surrender to Christ, he never will be found willing, never will come to Christ. But this, God is under no obligation to do. Sinners are ill-deserving. They are in a state of rebellion. God would be just, were he to destroy them. Therefore, if he does interpose, and subdue and renew the perverse hearts of any, and render them willing to submit, it must be of his own self-moving goodness, of his own free, rich, sovereign grace. According to the good pleasure of his own will, he works in men, when and where it seemeth

good in his sight, both to will, and to do those things, which are pleasing to him and connected with their salvation. And this accords with the apostle's statements, when preaching Christ crucified. Speaking of those who do come to Christ, who are truly converted, he says, ascribing it to God's sovereign goodness, "Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth." "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Again, "We are his workmanship, created unto good works, which God hath foreordained that we should walk in them." Again, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given to us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." Again, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Nay, more, the apostle considered the fact here disclosed, as cause for perpetual thanksgiving and praise. "For we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord

Jesus Christ." The prophetic declaration or promise of the Father to the Son, assuring him, that he should not suffer and die in vain,—"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," shows that, when God interposes his power, or pours out his Spirit, then, to whatever extent it seemeth good in his sight, sinners are rendered willing to submit to Christ.

These representations are in accordance with fact. In the pentecostal season of divine power, when the Spirit of God was so copiously poured out, what wonderful, glorious effects were the result! Thousands were convicted of sin, were subdued, and became willing to submit to Christ and receive the gospel. And so it was, in other seasons of the outpouring of the Spirit in the apostolic age. Men were made willing to submit to Christ, and embrace, and obey him as the Saviour of sinners. Thus it has been, and is still, in every genuine revival of religion. By the power of the Holy Spirit, which is then given, in God's self-moving, sovereign goodness, and grace, sinners are brought to Christ by the convicting and subduing power of the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the cross, further, includes the interesting truth, that God will carry forward and perfect the work of holiness, which he begins in any, and finally consummate their salvation in heaven.

In preaching the cross, the apostle preached this doctrine. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." He taught that God would keep alive, in those he had renewed, a disposition to cleave to Christ and press forward in faith and holiness, till their victory shall be complete. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Who then shall condemn the saints, the trophies of grace? God the Father elects and justifies them; God the Son died to redeem them; and God the Spirit renews and sanctifies them.

These truths belong to the doctrine of the cross of Christ, and are denoted by the expression in the text, "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is evident from the fact, that these are the great truths

on which the apostle dwelt in his preaching. These were the themes which filled and fired his soul. In these he gloried. And he gloried in them for good reasons.

These truths are all connected *with Christ crucified for sinners*, all point to that as the centre, all serve to develope the method of salvation, by the vicarious sufferings and death of Christ: glorying in them is but glorying in Christ.

These truths are *the power of God unto the salvation of sinners.* "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God, unto salvation, to every one that believeth." These doctrines not only disclose the method of salvation, devised for guilty man, by a crucified Redeemer; but they are adapted to save. They are the appointed instrumentality, in the hand of God, of effecting their salvation. They are the truths which, in fact, save men, who believe, receive, love, and obey them. No other system of truth brings forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace with God. No other is adapted like this, to show man his true character, condition and need; to humble, subdue and transform the soul; or, in fact, does produce these results.

These truths, while they bring salvation to man, *ascribe the whole work of man's salvation to the free, rich, sovereign grace of the Triune God.* None

others do so illustriously display the divine wisdom, power, benevolence, and grace.

Was not the apostle right, in the object of his glorying? Did not Heaven approve his course? And did he not find a crown of glory in reserve for him in heaven, when he finished his earthly service? And is there not a crown of glory laid up in heaven, for all who, in like manner, glory in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ?

And now, my hearers, do we glory in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do we believe, receive, and rest upon these great truths? Do our hearts cheerfully respond to what these doctrines disclose, of the character and will of God; of the character and claims of Christ; of the sinful nature, ruined state, and perishing need of man; and of the way, and the conditions of salvation? Are any reluctant to admit what these truths reveal, unwilling to submit to what they require, or disaffected towards this method of salvation? Do any prefer some other way of life? Do you choose a system, which will allow you to ascribe salvation to your own worthy deeds? Would you glory rather in doctrines, which teach the final salvation of the whole human family, be their character what it may, in this life? Or would you glory in a system which disrobes the Saviour of his divinity, and thus annihilates the atone-

ment, which denies the demerit of sin, as it denies the necessity of the atonement, and thus makes the cross of Christ of none effect? Would you glory in these, or in any other doctrines or system, contrary to that denoted by the cross of Christ? You would deviate widely from the resolution and example of Paul. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." And you would meet his divinely inspired anathema also: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than that which we have preached, let him be accursed." You resist the doctrines of the cross, at your peril.

But why not, in accordance with the example of the great apostle, glory only in the cross of Christ? In that method which eternal mercy has prepared, to save rebellious, self-ruined man, consistently with the honor of his law and justice? Why not, like him, glory in these great truths, which lay open and propose this method to us? Truths, which so magnify the wisdom and love of God, the benevolence and grace of Christ, and which are so reproving, purifying, and transforming to sinful man, which are the power of God to salvation? Why not exult in a method, which so exalts Jehovah, so honors the Saviour, and the Divine Spirit, while it saves those so guilty and lost, from

such a depth of ruin? Why not rejoice in a method, which saves ill-deserving sinners, in a way that magnifies the riches of sovereign grace, and will cause glory and adoration, thanksgiving and praise to redound to the Triune God, throughout eternal ages? Are the doctrines of the cross foolishness to any? Remember it is to them that perish. Is the gospel, in its true features and spiritual excellence, hid from any? "It is hid from them that are lost." Are the preciousness of a Saviour, and the matchless wisdom and grace of the plan of redemption concealed from any? It is proof that the God of this world has blinded their minds in their unbelief, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. See the impiety and the danger of so doing. Rather be constrained, like the apostle, to "count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." Let the great truths which appertain to Christ and him crucified, be your most interesting theme of contemplation. Let them be believed, received, and obeyed, and thus make you wise unto salvation. Let this method of saving lost men by grace awaken your warmest love, your liveliest gratitude, and constrain you to depart from all iniquity, to give yourselves away to Christ, and to live, henceforth, not unto yourselves, but unto him who died for you and rose again.

In conclusion, if the cross of Christ, as here explained, is worthy to be thus gloried in, if it is just ground for glorying, then we see the guilty, perilous attitude of those who despise and reject it. The doctrines of grace, which appertain to the sufferings and death of so glorious a personage, to purchase redemption and salvation for guilty, self-ruined man, cannot be despised and rejected, without deep impiety,—aggravated guilt; without putting the soul to infinite hazard. It is despising the richest display of divine perfections, that Jehovah has ever made, and contemning the only method, by which sinful man can be saved. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Have a care of your treatment of the cross of Christ.

SERMON VII.

THE PERILS AND THE SAFETY OF THE CHURCH.

EXODUS III. 3.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

MOSES, by a very remarkable providence, was raised up to deliver Israel from their oppressions in Egypt; and, though ignorant of his own destination to this work, still his breast glowed with deep feeling for his injured brethren. As he went abroad, and saw the cruelty with which they were treated, his indignation was enkindled against their unfeeling oppressors, and his soul burned to see his people avenged of their wrongs, and released from their sufferings. And he gave vent to his feelings, on a certain occasion, which made it necessary for him to flee from Egypt for his own safety. Seeing an Egyptian task-master cruelly beating a Hebrew, he could forbear no longer, but slew the Egyptian, and

hid him in the sand. But, finding that the transaction was discovered, and that Pharaoh sought to take his life, he fled into Midian, where, for years, he dwelt in retirement, keeping the flock of the priest of Midian; relinquishing, doubtless, all thought of ever being able to deliver his suffering people from the power of their oppressors. But when Jehovah's time had come, he appeared to Moses in the desert of Midian, and made known to him his purpose to send him to deliver Israel from their cruel bondage, and to conduct them to the promised land. The circumstances of this wondrous appearing of the Lord to Moses, are detailed in the connection.

Moses had led the flock to the back side of the desert, even to Horeb, afterwards called the Mount of God. And then, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. Moses was surprised at so unexpected a sight; but his surprise was increased, on perceiving, that the bush, though enveloped in flame, was not consumed, or impaired. And, as Moses thought to draw near to examine this wonderful phenomenon, the Lord called to him from out of the midst of the bush, and forbade his drawing near, and directed him to put off his shoes, as the place on which he stood was holy. And the Lord further said to him from the midst of the flame, "I am the God of thy

father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land, unto a good land, and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." "Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

I. The bush burning, yet not consumed, may be used to illustrate the afflictions of Israel in Egypt; the afflictions of the Church in the world; and the conflicts of individual Christians.

1. *We will attend to the illustration which it affords of the afflictions and preservation of the Israelites in Egypt.*

The flame, it is said by critics, was not in a cedar, but in a bramble or thorn bush. Such being quickly consumed ordinarily, the continuance of this bush was the more surprising. This emblem may suggest the feebleness of the Hebrews in Egypt and the ease with which they might be consumed. And as the bush was enveloped in flame, so the Israelites were in extreme distress. They were experiencing afflictions and treatment, which were suited to exterminate

them; and which, in the ordinary course of things, would have done it. When a new king arose, that knew not Joseph, he looked upon the increase and prosperity of the Hebrews with a jealous eye, and apprised his nobles, that this people were becoming more and mightier than they; and that it was necessary to adopt some crafty, politic measures, to prevent their rapid increase; lest in case of invasion they should join with the enemies of the king, and deprive him of his crown, or effect their own escape from his hands. Accordingly, in prosecution of their policy, they placed over the Israelites taskmasters to afflict them with heavy burdens, and to lay upon them a hard and rigorous service; and they caused them to build treasure cities, or fortifications, for Pharaoh in different parts of his kingdom; and made them to serve with rigor, and rendered their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and brick, and all manner of service in the field; all the service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor. But the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew. The king finding himself baffled, adopted another expedient to accomplish his purpose; which was to have all the male children born among the Hebrews put to death, first secretly; but not being able to accomplish this, he next gave commandment openly, that every son born

among the Israelites, they should cast into the river; determined thus to diminish and weaken them as a people, till there would be no danger of their doing him injury. Many of the learned are of the opinion that this inhuman edict was so abhorred by the Egyptians themselves, that they did not long carry it into extensive execution; and that it was repealed after the death of the king who enacted it, which Eusebius and others place in the fourth year after the birth of Moses. But whether this bloody decree was repealed or not, one thing is certain, that while it was in full force, in the providence of God, Moses was spared; and, at the expense of Pharaoh's daughter, was nursed, and instructed in all the learning of Egypt, and thus pre-eminently qualified to deliver Israel from that very power, which was pursuing such rigorous and effective measures to secure their diminution and subjugation. Thus we see the bush burning, yet not consuming. The Israelites were encompassed with the flames of oppression, and all those rigorous and exterminating measures which the cruel, crafty policy of the Egyptians could devise; and yet they were not diminished, but increased. In the furnace of affliction, they were not burnt. Experiencing those things which were suited to exterminate them, yet they lived a distinct people, and were multiplied. And instead of being

crushed, or even retained in bondage, we see them, soon after this, delivered from their oppressors by a signal victory, and becoming a great and powerful nation. How obviously significant of the case of the Israelites in Egypt was the bush, which Moses saw enveloped in flame, yet not consumed. And how suitable for Jehovah to employ such an emblem, when appearing to Moses to send him to deliver the people from their oppressors.

But as the nation of Israel was evidently typical of the true church, the emblem of the burning, unconsumed bush may suggest,

2. *The afflicted state of the Church in the world.*

The church in its militant state is destined to experience afflictions. It lies in an enemy's country. Being not of this world, but diverse from the world in its character and laws, spirit and practice, the world is in hostility towards it. The prince of this world is jealous of the increase and prosperity of the church, and therefore stirs up an opposing world towards it. He insinuates, that the increase of the church is an evil to the community. That, being a peculiar people, and having laws and maxims of their own, and aspiring after power for an injurious purpose, their enlargement is dangerous to the public good. Hence the world deem it important to adopt measures to lessen the influence, and

prevent the increase of Christians. Among other measures, cruel and horrid persecutions have been raised against the church. Christians have been opposed in their measures to promote their own increase, misrepresented and slandered, perplexed and abused. In many instances, they have been proscribed, and hunted out of the world by multitudes. The fagot, the rack, and various modes of torture and of death, have been employed to thin their ranks, and to deter others from espousing their cause. Thus the church has been literally enveloped in flame. The world has ever been disposed to treat the church with rigor. That native disaffection which was manifested towards the great Head of the church, and which he apprised his followers they would meet, is ever jealous of the increase of the church; and it keeps the world awake to such measures as are adapted to harass, perplex, and afflict the people of God, prevent their increase, and diminish their influence. To accomplish this, it is not only ever ready to originate politic and crafty measures, but it has proceeded to numerous scenes of actual bloodshed and slaughter, which have seemed to threaten the church with entire extinction. At one time, the implements of death were wielded by pagan powers in a succession of bloody persecutions. At another period the work

of Christian slaughter was carried on by papal authority, through successive scenes of open persecution.

But amidst all these fires of affliction and death, the church has lived. And though the maddened rage of an opposing world has, in some ages, exhausted all the policy and all the power, it could employ to exterminate the church, yet the bush is not burnt, the church is not consumed. Individuals, it is true, have been cut off, and called from this militant state, to join the church triumphant sooner than they otherwise would have been; but others have risen up in succession to supply their places, so that it long since became proverbial, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

And though efforts are still made, of a milder character, indeed, but with the same fixed and wakeful aim, to undermine and root out the church, by decrying her doctrines as odious, by propagating plausible yet subversive error, yet the church still increases, and her doctrines spread; so that notwithstanding all the policy and efforts which are now employed, or which have been employed, to diminish the numbers or the influence of the church, some of which have seemed really fitted to exterminate it, as the flames to consume the bush, still the church lives and thrives. The bush is waxing more

thrifty. And the time never has been when the church could be seen enlarging and extending so rapidly, and so widely, as it is seen to do at the present time. The bush burning, yet not consumed, is then a lively emblem of the church in her militant state.

3. *It is also emblematical of the state of individual Christians.* Christians, individually, while in this life are in a state of spiritual conflict. They are assailed without and within, by numerous foes, whose aim and tendency are, to prevent their advances in holiness, and thus despoil them of salvation. And when it is considered how numerous and formidable these enemies of the soul are, and how insufficient the Christian is, of himself, to resist them, there is reason for surprise, that he is not overcome and ruined. The Christian's spiritual foes may be summed up in these: an alluring, ensnaring world; a malignant, yet subtle adversary; and a deceitful, treacherous heart, or the remains of the carnal mind. The world presents to the eye of sense its almost infinitely various objects, as lures to draw away the heart from God, and divert the eye of faith from heavenly things; while unsanctified nature, pleased with the objects presented, wishes, and even pleads, for indulgence. The arch-deceiver, who is always seeking whom he may destroy, is

giving power to these lures, and by his suggestions and influence, exciting and invigorating depraved inclinations and evil passions; thus giving force to temptation; while the heart, not set against sin, and fixed on God with sufficient firmness and wakefulness, does not readily perceive the fowler's snare, or is inclined to yield to the temptation presented. The Christian, thus pursued, is in some instances ensnared, wounded, and afflicted; but he recovers. With grief of heart, and with more vigilance, he again renews the conflict. And such is the nature, the subtlety, and the perseverance of his foes, and such is the dimness of his faith, the languor of his love, and the feebleness of his resistance, that it will be a wonder if he be not again ensnared. Yea, it is matter of astonishment, that he is not utterly vanquished; and does not become an easy prey to the destroyer of souls. In view of their own inability to sustain this conflict, it is intimated in the Scriptures, that the righteous are scarcely saved. They sometimes feel disheartened; view the issue of the conflict as doubtful, and fear they shall one day fall by the enemy's hand; but still the Christian lives. His spiritual life is sustained, and will be sustained, strange as it may appear. His faithful love will not expire. Though he fall, he shall rise again. Though often in distress, he is not in

despair. Though sometimes cast down, he is not destroyed. This bush, though encompassed with flame, and in itself considered, easily demolished, is not consumed, and will not be consumed. The Christian is ripening for heaven. With all his feebleness, he is destined to overcome his spiritual foes. The righteous are saved; though it be with difficulty, and through much tribulation.

Having noticed the emblematical instruction afforded by the bush burning, in reference to Israel in Egypt, to the church, and individual believers,

II. *We may consider why the righteous, though in peril, are secure.*

It was very surprising to Moses that a bramble bush, which, in ordinary cases, is so speedily consumed by fire, should, in this instance, be enveloped in a vigorous flame, and yet not be burnt. This was something altogether out of the course of nature. But the phenomenon was soon explained to him. He soon perceived that the Angel of the Lord was in the midst of the bush. This unfolded the mystery. But who is this Angel of the Lord, that appeared unto Moses in the bush? Not a created Angel, surely, as appears from what follows, but the Angel, Jehovah, the Angel of the Covenant, who is Jehovah. This Angel called unto Moses and said, "I am the God of thy father, the

God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." The name, which the speaker here assumes, is a title of Jehovah, and implies self-existence, independence, immutability, incomprehensibleness, eternity, and consummate perfection. And there is much reason to believe that the speaker here was the Redeemer, the second person in the Divine Trinity, who had commenced the work of mediation, and was making proposals of peace to men, though the time of his incarnation and suffering had not yet arrived. He is declared to be, "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." And when dwelling in human flesh, he evidently assumed the title here used, when he said to the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am." What more evident, than that the Saviour meant here to assert his eternity and self-existence, and that he was the Jehovah of the Old Testament, who appeared to Moses in the bush. But suffice it to say, if the Almighty God was in the midst of the bush, the phenomenon is sufficiently accounted for, why the bush was not burnt.

Here then we have the reason, not only why the bush was not burnt, but why the children of Israel were not consumed under their cruel oppression and hard bondage in Egypt. The self-existent, Almighty God was in the midst of them, therefore they were preserved, and therefore they were increased. The Angel of the Covenant, who is the mighty Redeemer, was with them, and not only preserved and increased them, but wrought deliverance for them, gave them victory, and led them forth to Canaan.

We are shown also by this emblem, why the church in her militant state is not crushed and exterminated, when so mightily assailed. The Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is with her. "The God of Jacob is her refuge." God is in the midst of her. Therefore, the measures employed for her extermination prove abortive. Therefore it is that the flame in which she is enveloped does not take effect. Though in a fiery furnace, yet the Son of God is with her; and therefore she is not consumed. He often defeats the counsels of her enemies, baffles their efforts, and the most promising measures, which they adopt to diminish and weaken the church, he often causes to eventuate in her enlargement and prosperity.

Here, then, we see the reason why the church

has continued, and increased, amidst all the corruption, persecutions, and afflictions with which it has been assailed; and amidst all the policy, crafty measures, and malignant efforts, which the combined powers of earth and darkness have employed to exterminate, diminish, or vex it. The Lord dwells in Zion. His dwelling-place cannot be demolished. His own declaration is, "I will cleanse her blood, that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion." He will not only preserve and defend the church, but purify and enlarge it. He dwells in it for this purpose.

We here see why it is that individual Christians do not sink under the severity of their conflicts. How they are supported under overwhelming trials, excruciating tortures, when immured in prisons, confined in chains, or appointed to some lingering, painful death. The peace of God supports their souls. Their Saviour is with them; on him they lean; his presence, his consolations, and his grace sustain them. And we see why Christians do not fall from their steadfastness, yield to temptation, plunge into sin and perish; why they are not led away by the lures of the world, the lusts of the flesh, the subtleties of Satan, or some specious heresy to their ruin. The Lord is their keeper; and having begun a good work in them,

he will perform and perfect it. In every temptation, he will make a way for their escape. The author and finisher of their faith is with them. He keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation. He leads the humble inquirer into truth. He works in his people to will and to do, therefore they work out their salvation with fear and trembling. He gives them grace and strength equal to their day; therefore it is that they conquer.

We may learn from this subject,

1. *That the enemies of the Church, who are hoping and looking for her extinction, will surely be disappointed.* The things they desire, they will never see. Though they may labor and plot, and even rave, as they have done in some instances, to effect her extermination, yet they never will accomplish their object. They may heap fagots around her, and fan the fires of affliction, but this bush will never be consumed. The Son of God is in the midst of it, and the flame, however fierce, cannot take effect. Though their number and power be increased a thousand fold, the hopes of success would be vain. More are for the church than are against it. The church having the Angel of the Covenant in the midst of it, cannot be exterminated, but is destined to live and to have enlargement. True, some por-

tion of the visible church, or that which professes to be such, may be found so corrupt as to be disowned of God and blotted out, but the true church will live, and somewhere find enlargement. Her opposers may ruin themselves in the contest, and they may occasion the more speedy flight to heaven of numbers of her members; but the true church must live, and increase too, in spite of all that the combined powers of earth and darkness can array against her. The church is built upon a rock, and it is the declaration of Him who is in the midst of her, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at the rage of a hostile world against the church, while he declares the decree, that the church must advance and fill the earth, that the heathen shall become the inheritance of Christ, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession.

The friends of Zion may, then, dismiss their fears respecting the extermination of the church, and may be encouraged to labor and pray for its advancement, as their labors and prayers will not be abortive, for the church will live and flourish. God has said he will make her "an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee." "For Zion's sake hold not your peace,

and for Jerusalem's sake rest not, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

2. *Individual Christians may derive encouragement from our subject to press forward in their conflicts with their spiritual foes, with the cheering hope that victory will be theirs.* Though outward temptations assail them; though inward trials distress and terrify them, and afflictions and sufferings, in some instances, bear hard upon them; and it seems as if all combined would overwhelm them, still let them remember that the Angel of the Covenant is with them, who has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" and though in the furnace of affliction, they will not be consumed. The bush will not be burned. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The grace of Him who made his dwelling with them will be sufficient for them; and he will cause all things to work for their good.

3. *If a holy God dwells in the midst of his people, what manner of persons it becometh them to be in all holy conversation and godliness.* Holiness becomes the dwelling-place of the Lord, for ever. "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" How it concerns them to keep clean and pure this temple of the Lord; to see that there is nothing in their heart or hands, that

shall make it inconsistent for God to dwell with them; that their character and lives be such, that God shall not be ashamed to be called their God, and to own them as his people. It concerns them to reflect his image, and thus show forth his praise. And while they contemplate the interesting fact, that "the foundation of God standeth sure," and that "the Lord knoweth them that are his," they should be careful to prove that they are his, and are on this foundation, by observing his direction: "And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Finally: *If the Keeper of Israel, who is the mighty God, is with his people; if his Spirit dwells in their hearts, then it is a good thing to be a Christian.* It is no mean thing to be enrolled among the citizens of Zion. It is a privilege which it will not be safe to despise. It is the part of wisdom to cast in our lot with the true children of God. And to you, my hearers, not of this character, permit me to say, supported by the Word of God, that if you would be safe, and have solid peace; if you would be carried through the tribulations of this life unhurt, and have lasting honor, imperishable beauty, and unutterable happiness in heaven for ever, be a Christian: possess the character of a true child of God. This will insure it all.

SERMON VIII.

AFFLICTIONS AN AID IN THE WAY TO HEAVEN.

Acts xiv. 22.

We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

These words were addressed to Christians, to strengthen their faith and encourage them to endure trials with fortitude, and to press forward in the divine life with patience and perseverance. One would scarcely think, at first view, that they who had just set out in the Christian course would be greatly encouraged by such a suggestion; and yet, encouraged they were.

While Paul and Barnabas were preaching the Gospel in Iconium with much success, where a great multitude of Greeks and Jews believed, unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles against them, and caused so much opposition and threatening, that the apostles fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, where they were well received. But here, where

the way was open for them to preach the Gospel with success, they were not allowed to preach. They were followed by certain disaffected Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who, in their rage against the apostles, persuaded the people to stone Paul; having done which, they drew him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. But as the disciples stood around him, deeply mourning, "he rose up and came into the city, and the next day departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and Iconium, and Antioch," not dishearetned by their trials, conversing with the young converts in those places, confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and apprising them that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The words teach us the following things:

I. *While in this world, Christians are subject to various afflictions.* This we learn from the Word of God, and from painful experience. "In this world," said Christ to his disciples, "ye shall have tribulation." Man is born to trouble: affliction is the common lot of man: Christians are not exempt from a full share in them; in many instances they have more than others. This is not because they

are more ill deserving than others, but because it is for their good. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Who does not experience more or less of affliction? The afflictions of man are various. They arise from the frailty of our natures, from the opposition of the world to religion, and from the disciplinary hand of the Lord for our benefit. But the grand procuring cause of all the evils we meet with in this life is sin. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

These tribulations consist, in part, in pains and diseases of the body. Many endure much suffering from this source. Many are afflicted by the loss of health—are obliged to struggle for long years with disease, unable to accomplish their purposes or enjoy the blessings of life. Many are afflicted by losses and disappointments. After they have acquired a property by the toil and care of years, it takes wings and disappears. In various ways men are turned out of their course; their property and plans are frustrated, and they are grievously disappointed. Great tribulations have Christians been called to pass through in their course to heaven, occasioned by the opposition of the world to divine truth and religion. Call to mind the sufferings of the pro-

phets and people of God in old times, and the trials of the apostles and primitive Christians, from this source. Who can compute or conceive of the amount of suffering endured by Christians since the apostolic age, from persecution? What vast multitudes have been hunted and driven out of the world, put to death by the most cruel modes of torture, that malignant ingenuity could devise. And at the present time, in some portions of the world, they who have renounced idolatry and embraced Christianity, under the preaching of the missionaries of the Cross, are enduring much tribulation from persecution. Even in our own enlightened land, Christians experience more or less annoyance from the opposition of the world to the Gospel and to religion. They are impeached and opposed in their efforts to promote the purity of the churches and the prosperity of Zion. In some instances their good conversation is falsely accused, and reproach is cast upon them on account of their adherence to Christ and his truth. More especially are they subject to animadversion and disaffection, who are set for the defence of the Gospel, if they faithfully dispense it, reprove sin, and labor to correct what they deem to be wrong. They are sometimes, as was their Lord and Master, "hated without a cause." These things are among the tribulations, through

which Christians must pass in their way to the kingdom of heaven. There is another trial, by no means the lightest, endured by Christians and ministers, when they see error and irreligion prevailing in the community, when divisions and discords exist in the church, or scandalous things are chargeable upon any of its members; when reproach rests upon Zion. When these things exist, they who love Zion and are seeking the purity and enlargement of the church, and the conversion of sinners, are exceedingly pained. "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt." They have a burden resting upon them from which they would gladly be relieved—a weight of mental suffering which has, no doubt, impaired the health and shortened the life of many a Christian and Christian minister. And need I mention, as among the tribulations of this life, bereavement, from the death of dear friends, when such an afflicting instance of it is now before us?* We are indeed subject to sore bereavements. Our dearest friends die: the parents of our blood and life, however useful, however much our earthly happiness depends on them, are torn from us. Parents are bereft of beloved children; children are bereft of parents; brothers and sisters are separated

* Preached at the funeral of the wife of Rev. G. W. Hathaway, Bloomfield.

by death. Thus the loved ones, who, we fondly hoped, would accompany us through life, and contribute essentially to our happiness in this vale of tears, are snatched away; and bereavements are among the tribulations of this life. I will not enumerate further, since each one has painful proof that what the apostle taught in that age is true still—that while in this world we are subject to tribulation.

II. *This fact need not prevent any from entering the kingdom of God.* Though the afflictions of this life are grievous and painful in the endurance, yet they need not diminish or weaken faith, or any of the Christian graces. And though they lie all along the Christian's pathway, still his progress in his heavenward course need not be at all retarded by them. It is not the tendency of afflictions, when viewed aright, to weaken faith, unless it be in the promises of earth, by causing us to see the treachery of the world in flattering men to expect from it what it does not afford. It seems to have been intended that tribulation should not divert the attention of men from their spiritual, heavenly course, nor hinder their progress therein. The apostle having been driven from place to place by persecution, went again through those places, confirming and strengthening the souls of believers, exhorting them

to continue in the faith, at the same time apprising them that they must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God, or press their way to heaven. So far are the tribulations of this life from being adapted to weaken the faith of Christians, or hinder their progress in their heavenly course;

III. *They are necessary to promote the Christian's progress in the divine life, and to accelerate his fitness for entering the kingdom of heaven.* "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The word "must" does not mean that the thing is fixed in itself by any fatal necessity, but that it is fitting and proper that it should be so. Such is the frailty of our nature, the deceitfulness of our hearts, the nature of religion, that a conflict is to be expected. It will happen, and it need not be avoided. In such circumstances it is proper that the conflict should be endured. The apostle here reminds young converts, and those who have entered upon the Christian course, that they are to meet with more or less of affliction in their way to the heavenly rest; but he does not mention this to deter any from entering on that course, or to dishearten any who have set out in it: on the contrary, he would inspire them with fresh courage, strengthen their faith, have them know what to ex-

pect, and arm themselves for the conflict, that when troubles shall come, they may not be disappointed nor disheartened, but meet and brave them with a holy faith and fortitude, trusting in God for support, and for grace and strength to carry them through. The apostle does not state why it is necessary that Christians should pass through much tribulation in their way to heaven; yet I think we can discover some reasons why it may be so.

1. That we may know more of the evil nature, tendency and effects of sin, and thus be prepared to appreciate the blessing of deliverance from it. Were we to be taken to heaven exempt from toils, conflicts with remaining sin, an opposing world, the adversary of souls, and other trials and afflictions from within and without, which beset the pilgrim's path, we should not fully know how great the evil from which Christians are delivered when they arrive at heaven, and how great a blessing to be thus delivered. We can clearly see that the entrance upon the heavenly rest will be vastly more sweet and delightful to those, who have endured a severe conflict with spiritual enemies, and passed through much tribulation and affliction, in their way thither.

2. Tribulations are needful and fitting to develope our character and make us acquainted with ourselves. No circumstances, perhaps, in which we

are placed are so well adapted, and so effectual, to give us a correct knowledge of ourselves, as those of adversity and affliction. If we were favored with uninterrupted prosperity, and should find all things going well with us, according to our wishes, we might be, in a measure, ignorant of our own hearts and our own spirits; might think ourselves reconciled to God, and willing that he should dispose of us and of ours as he sees fit. But when God lays his afflictive hand heavily upon us, frustrates our plans, breaks in upon our arrangements, takes from us near and dear friends, as a bosom companion, children, parents, brother or sister, whose society contributed essentially to our happiness, and who, we fondly hoped, would be permitted to accompany us all the way through life, and administer to our aid and comfort; when he thus turns us out of our course, or appoints to us the endurance of some living trial, bodily or mental, we are then furnished with a stern and effectual test by which to try ourselves. We have opportunity to ascertain whether we can bow with humble submission to the will of our holy, righteous Sovereign, believing that he does all things wisely and well—whether we can say, as was said of old, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good." "The cup which my

Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Now, if in adversity we are conscious of possessing submission and reconciliation to God, it is well; we obtain new and good evidence of Christian character, of being the children of God, which we cannot obtain in a time of prosperity. Our hope is in this way confirmed, and our faith strengthened; and we are led to commit our way to him, and cast our burdens upon him, and rely upon him with increased confidence. But if in affliction we cannot submit to the will of God, and acquiesce in his dealings with us, it is evidence against us, that our hearts are not right. And this development may increase our self-knowledge, may serve to humble us, and result in true repentance and conscious reconciliation to the will of God. In this way, afflictions are needful, and may prove beneficial.

To pass through much tribulation, in our earthly pilgrimage, is fitting and needful, for the purpose of discipline. God evidently designs that his children shall grow, not only in the knowledge of him, but in a conformity to his will, until they become meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. And, among all the instrumentalities which he employs in carrying forward the work of holi-

ness, which he has commenced in them, afflictions are not the least important. These prove a very salutary discipline. Painful indeed they are, grievous to be borne, but well adapted both to develope, and subdue the remains of corrupt nature, evil passions and inclinations, love of self and of the creature, disobedience, reluctance to duty, proneness to wander, to leave the path of duty, or trust in an arm of flesh. Now, as God loves his children, and designs to do them good, he corrects them when he sees it needful. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Afflictions are his rod, wherewith he reclaims their wanderings, keeps them in the way of obedience, and in the path of duty. Christians, when afflicted, feeling not only their dependence on God, but their need of his support and help, cleave unto him as an effect of tribulation. Said an afflicted disciple, not long since in my hearing, "I find that afflictions bring me near to God." It is written, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth, therefore despise not the chastening of the Almighty." Again, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Christians have been in fact greatly benefited by the tribulations they have met with, in their pathway to the kingdom. They have become more spiritual, more weaned from the world, and more

heavenly-minded. They have been made to live nearer to God, to be more watchful, more prayerful, more useful, to find sweeter communion and richer consolation. Many a minister has been rendered more spiritual, and more successful, by the salutary effects of afflictions.

The Christian's path, though it leads through much tribulation, surely conducts to heaven. "We must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God." Christians will surely enter into the heavenly rest, though they have to wade through much of sorrow; and adversity does not hinder them. So far from impeding their march, their afflictions will but accelerate their progress, as they will advance their fitness for the heavenly mansions. As the tribulations and afflictions of this life serve to wean them from the world, by showing their treachery and disappointing nature, they cause them to long and pant after that better country, where there is no sin, nor sorrow, nor sighing, no more parting with friends, no evil of any kind; where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." And, as a crowning benefit, of having much tribulation in their way to the heavenly rest, it will make their entrance upon that rest far more sweet and delightful. How great the contrast! Here,

"By glimmering hopes, and gloomy fears,
We trace the sacred road;
Through dismal swamps, and dangerous snares
We make our way to God.

Our journey is a thorny maze,
But we march upwards still;
Forget these troubles of the ways,
And reach at Zion's hill.

There, on a green and flowery mount,
Our weary souls shall sit,
And, with transporting joys, recount
The labors of our feet."

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SERMON IX.

THE BELIEVER'S REMEMBRANCE OF CHRIST.

DEUT. VIII. 2.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.

THESE words were addressed by Moses to his beloved Israel, when about to leave them. He had been with them in all their journeyings in the wilderness for a long period; had witnessed all their murmurings, and afflictions, and the many mighty works which God wrought in their behalf; and having conducted them near to the confines of the promised land, and being about to go the way of all the earth, he gave them his parting, dying counsel. The object he had in view was to secure their adherence to the worship and service of Jehovah, and their obedience to his commands; well knowing that on this would depend the welfare and

prosperity of the nation. Among the numerous exhortations and injunctions which he gave them, is the one here cited. Here he enjoins it upon them to look back upon their past history; to remember all the way in which God had led them; the wonderful things which he had wrought for them; the signal mercies he had shown them; the various afflictions and chastisements with which he had visited them for their sins; that he might humble them, subdue and purify them, cure their murmurings, and make them his obedient children. Such retrospection Moses deemed important, to keep them humble, thankful, and obedient.

We may now leave the children of Israel, and apply this injunction to ourselves; and in doing this, may take a retrospect of the way in which the Lord Jesus Christ has led us these many years, and call to remembrance what he has done for us. And in these reminiscences, we have to go back to the period of infancy, for his care of us has been commensurate with our existence.

He has protected us. He it is, that preserved our lives during the period of feeble, helpless infancy; and in childhood, and youth, and in our riper years. He preserved us from disease, or healed our sicknesses. He shielded us from seen and unseen dangers; kept our feet from falling, and

our souls from death; turned aside the shafts of the destroyer, which have been flying thick around us. He has watched over us by day and by night; has never lost sight of us for a moment since our existence commenced. He has, all along, provided for, and supplied our numerous wants. He has given us comfortable habitations, food and raiment, and domestic endearments; and has provided for our comfort in ten thousand ways. Privileges invaluable he has granted us; with the means of grace and salvation, he has greatly distinguished us.

All our temporal blessings, and all our spiritual privileges should pass in review, and be remembered, as his gifts; as these come to us, sinners, through virtue of his atoning death and mediation; he having thereby purchased the prerogative, at a painful price, of bestowing blessings upon guilty men, who had forfeited them by sin. We should look back with the deepest emotions to the time, never to be forgotten, when he sought us out, and found us in a waste howling wilderness, in the devious paths of sin and folly, under condemnation, as transgressors of Jehovah's laws, and exposed to his wrath and curse; poor and miserable, wretched, blind and naked; dead in trespasses and sins; "having no hope, and without God in the world."

And we should remember how he pitied us;

and *opened our eyes to a discovery of our lost and perishing condition*, as sinners against God; our exposure to endless death; our need of an Almighty helper. We should remember how he, self-moved, drew us to himself; melted our hearts into contrition; made us trophies of his grace; inspired us with confidence in his ability to save; enabled us to cast ourselves on his mercy, to rely upon his atoning merits; and give our souls to him in covenant; and then he gave us peace, and joy, and hope, thus drawing us from the horrible pit and miry clay, and filling our mouth with songs of praise.

We should, also, remember, with what *patience he has borne with our unbelief, unfaithfulness, remissness*, ingratitude, and departures from our first love, our conformity to the world, our covetousness, our reluctance to respond to his calls, our want of zeal in his service, and in aiding his cause, and our various provocations. And we should remember how kindly he has healed our backslidings, pardoned our ingratitude, and all our offences, quickened our languid spirits, revived our drooping graces, heard our supplications, consoled us in afflictions, alleviated our sorrows, aided us in duty, invigorated our faith, cheered us with promises and immortal hopes, and given us grace and strength equal to our day. In short, we should remember

all the way in which he has led us through this wilderness of temptations and trials, sins, sorrows and conflicts; all that he has done for us, of his self-moving mercy and kindness, not only the favors he has bestowed, but the chastisements and corrections with which he has visited us, and the object and design of them. We should frequently take a retrospect of these things; never forget them; write them upon the tablet of our memories.

Such a retrospect, if faithfully pursued, has its uses.

I. *It serves to keep alive an affecting sense of the condescension and disinterested compassion and benevolence of the Saviour.* That one of such infinite dignity, and glorious excellence and majesty, as belong to Christ, should thus stoop to regard creatures so mean, sinful, and ill-deserving; that he should condescend to preserve them; to watch over them; to defend them; to provide for them, and bestow upon them such constant care, such unremitting kindness, such countless benefits; while they make him no suitable returns, but are disobedient, unthankful, unprofitable, and ill-deserving; especially that he should, of his self-moved compassion, come to them when dead in trespasses and sins, and exposed to merited destruction; and convince them of sin, bring them to repentance, renew

them to holiness, pardon and heal them, sanctify and save them; and do all for them that we have noticed; should subdue their obstinacy of will, overcome their unbelief, ingratitude, perverseness of heart, and all their resistance, and all the obstacles to their holiness and salvation; shows condescension and mercy without a parallel; disinterestedness and benevolence, which are infinite. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." How surpassing comprehension, how condescending, self-moved, and disinterested his love, that we, self-ruined, ill-deserving sinners, should become, and be called the sons of God. "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Thus a remembrance of what Christ has done for us, of all the way which Christ has led us, these many years, could not fail to impress us, it would seem, with an affecting sense of the amazing condescension, and self-moved benevolence of the Son of God towards our guilty race.

II. *It would tend to awaken in us a humbling sense of our own helplessness, ill-desert, and constant necessities*, and of what we have already cost the Saviour. By proper retrospection as to what Christ has done for us, a faithful remembrance of all the

way in which he has led us hitherto, we must be deeply impressed with the amazing expense which he has laid out upon us.

What expense of condescension, what strength of compassionate regard, and what amount of merciful care, watchfulness, and kindness have been expended upon us, from our first existence to this hour! What an amount of power in upholding, protecting, and defending us; in producing the means of support and comfort, and in maintaining that system of Providence by which our countless wants are duly supplied, and all the circumstances and events of our life arranged and allotted. What an overflowing of beneficence in bestowing and continuing such great and invaluable privileges, and in strewing, all along our pathway, objects adapted to delight our senses, and to contribute essentially to our comfort and enjoyment, while we are on the earth. And what an amount of divine influence has been exerted in opening our blind eyes, and unstopping our deaf ears, subduing our obstinate wills, overcoming the love and dominion of sin, moulding the heart anew, restoring the divine image, producing faith, and all the Christian graces; and keeping alive and carrying forward the divine life in our souls. What energy of divine grace is requisite to counteract the downward tendency of nature, to en-

able us to resist temptation successfully, to overcome the world, the flesh, the adversary, principalities and powers, and all our spiritual foes; and to keep us, through faith and holiness, unto eternal life; to make us conquerors, and more than conquerors, over every opposing foe.

And as yet we have hardly begun to contemplate what we have cost the Saviour. We must contemplate the price at which he purchased the prerogative of bestowing pardon, and all this favor, and all this grace, upon the guilty and ill-deserving. We must go back far beyond the commencement of our own existence, and see the Son of God laying aside his heavenly glory, entering the world in human flesh, taking the form of a servant; and though possessed of infinite riches, yet becoming poor, that thereby he might bestow riches on us. What an amazing sacrifice. Contemplate his life of humiliation, privation, self-denial, and suffering on earth! But who can conceive of the amount of suffering endured by him at Gethsemane and on Calvary? It was to purchase redemption for us, to save our lives, that he gave his own. And now, have we cost the Saviour so much? How humbling; what helplessness and ruin were ours, that we should need to have so much done for us; so much expense laid out upon us? Without the shedding

of his blood there could be no remission of our guilt. Verily, we are unprofitable servants. A vast amount has been expended upon us. A consideration of it is well adapted to humble us. How wonderful that so much should have been done and expended for creatures so unworthy! Ah! here is the solution of the mystery, the soul has worth. The divine Saviour knew its value. He saw what it must suffer endlessly, if lost; and what it was capable of enjoying, if saved. Therefore, he voluntarily paid the amazing price requisite for its ransom. And in all the way he has led us hitherto, these many years, he has been prompted by the same pure, disinterested benevolence, and mercy.

A remembrance of the way in which Christ has led us is of use,

III. *To give us some sense of our infinite indebtedness to him.* Can we duly remember and consider what Christ has done for us; the vast expense he has laid out upon us, without having an oppressive, appalling sense of indebtedness and obligation to him? Has he exchanged infinite riches for poverty, that he might raise us to glory and a crown? Did he subject himself to unutterable agonies, and an ignominious death, to expiate human guilt, even our guilt? Did he give himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto

himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works? And having obtained eternal redemption for all who obey him, by offering up himself a sacrifice to divine justice; and having thereby purchased the prerogative of showing mercy to sinners, has he ever since been laboring to carry into effect the great object of his atoning death, the redemption of lost men? Has this been his object and aim, all the way in which he has led us, these many years, in all the care he has bestowed, in all the mercy and kindness he has shown us, and in all the expense he has laid out upon us, what a debt of gratitude and love do we, individually, owe him! The inquiry may well be awakened in us: "What shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits toward us?" How should our breasts continually swell and glow with the liveliest emotions of gratitude for what his wondrous mercy has wrought for us, and on our account. And what fervent love should we feel, and manifest, in return for his singular love. How ought we to abound in praise to him whose mercy to us has been so great?

IV. Again, is not such a reminiscence of the way in which Christ has led us adapted to rouse and excite us *to deny ourselves, and live and labor for him?* Has he expended upon us such condescension and love, so much care and power, be-

neficence and mercy, benevolence, long suffering and grace; done so much for us, and has he suffered so much to qualify himself for this work of mercy, to purchase the privilege of doing this for the guilty; and will not a due consideration of this present the most powerful incentive to spend and be spent for Christ; to co-operate with him, not only in effecting our own sanctification and salvation, but in efforts to extend his redemption, to carry into effect the object of his atoning death, to promote his honor and the advancement of his kingdom? What more weighty motives can be found than are here presented, to constrain us to employ our time, talents, influence, and worldly substance, nay, all we have and are, in promoting his cause, spreading his Gospel, and aiding to advance his kingdom on earth while we live. Has he done and suffered so much for us? Shall we, then, withhold any thing from him which it is in our power to render him in return, which may contribute, in any degree, to his honor or praise, or to make him known, and extend his salvation to perishing souls?

Is it not, then, our reasonable duty; is it not sacredly incumbent on us frequently to take a retrospect of the way in which Christ has led us, to remember all that he has done for us; that we may feel the effects that such a reminiscence is adapted

to produce; and be constrained to consecrate and devote ourselves to his service, and the advancement of his cause and honor; and that we may never want incentives to do whatever in us lies for him who has done so much for us?

And at what time is this retrospection more suitable and binding than at present, when we are seated at the sacramental table as his disciples, cheered with the hope of having been made partakers of grace, and of being interested in his redemption; and especially when observing an ordinance instituted by himself for the very purpose of calling us to this retrospection, of awakening these reminiscences, lest we should forget what he has done for us? "This do in remembrance of me." What are we to remember? We are to remember who he is, and what he is; what he has suffered and done to purchase redemption for us; what he has done for us individually; what we have cost him; what he is still doing; what we still need that he should do, and hope and expect that he will do, for us; that we may be led suitably to praise him; that our gratitude and love may be enkindled; that we may see what we owe him, and be constrained to give and devote ourselves, as his property, to his service and glory, now and for ever.

SERMON X.

THE BLISS OF THE BELIEVER CONSUMMATED.

PSALM XVII. 15.

I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.

THIS is the language of a child of God, and language which none but a child of God can, with propriety, adopt or employ. And it shows that the Christian differs essentially in his character and prospects from all others. Natural men, making the world, and the things of it, the supreme good and chief portion of the soul, seem to desire nothing better. Their inquiry is, "Who will show us any good?" But it is only earthly good that they seek.

The views and feelings of the true child of God are essentially different. The things that are agreeable to the taste and feelings of the children of the world do not fill his eye, nor feast his soul. His eye and heart are fixed on a better good, which he hopes one day to inherit. The text teaches, that

when the Christian awakes from the sleep of death, he finds his character perfected, and his happiness consummated.

I. *Christians, while in this mortal state, are not satisfied.* They are satisfied with the law and government of God, and with the method of salvation revealed in the Gospel. In these they desire no change. But with many things appertaining to their present condition they are not satisfied. An apostle says, in reference to believers while in this earthly tabernacle: "We groan, being burdened." It is obvious, from their longings, their pantings after God, after conformity to his will, after his presence, and the light of his countenance, that, while here, they desire much which they find not.

They are not satisfied with *themselves*, with reference to their spiritual attainments, and the degree of their conformity to the will of God. They find in themselves numerous imperfections; much remaining strength of evil propensities and inclinations, which interrupt their spiritual progress; much dulness of spirit, languor of feeling, weakness of faith, and want of zeal in the service of God; much love of the creature, and conformity to the world. They find a proneness to neglect duty and to depart from God. Though they strive to walk in accordance with the directions of the Gospel, still they

come so far short in the service they render to God, that they are not satisfied with their life.

They are not satisfied with their *bodies*. These are marred by sin and the effects of sin: they are the seat of evil propensities and passions, which lurk and struggle for the ascendency. The body, moreover, they perceive to be frail, fading, and decaying, subject to disease, infirmity, pain, and death. It serves to clog the soul in its upward flight, and to chain it down to earth and sense.

They are not satisfied with the *course of this world*. They cannot approve the maxims and principles by which men are governed, the ends at which they aim, and their treatment of God and their fellow-beings. The prevalence of fraud, robbery, intemperance, licentiousness, oppression, murder, infidelity, every form of error, and every species of vice, distresses them.

When they look out upon this otherwise fair world, and see what havoc sin makes, what waste of human life it occasions, what untold wretchedness it produces, their eye affects their hearts; they are pained and burdened in view of the miseries of their fellow-men; they desire other things, and exclaim: "O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" Christians in this world are not indeed comfortless: they have much satisfaction in the ser-

vice and worship of God, in communion with him, in walking in his ordinances and statutes, and in the experience of the light of his countenance. They derive great consolation from the Gospel. Their enjoyment rises far higher than that of the most favored of the children of this world; still they have much to distress them, and they have longings after that perfection of good, of which, at present, they have pleasing foretastes.

But it is the will of God, concerning his children, that their utmost desires be filled; and, inasmuch as in their present state their perfect satisfaction is impossible,

II. *They are to be made the subjects of important changes.* These changes come in good time, and through appropriate agencies.

They are effected, in part, *at the period of death.* Christians are subject to death: they must die as well as others, though they die not like others. The death of Christians is represented as being but a sleep, or a falling asleep in Jesus. This is implied in the text: "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." It is sleep from which men awake. The apostle teaches the same thing: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that sleep." Believers are removed from this imperfect state, in which they experience and witness

so much that is painful, by falling asleep. Death terminates this state of imperfection. Being united to Christ by faith and in love, they "die in the Lord." And while their bodies slumber in the ground, beneath their Saviour's power, and under his care, their souls go to be with him in the kingdom of his glory.

Another change awaits believers, at the period of the *resurrection of the dead.* The happiness of Christians, even in heaven, however it may rise high, and be unmixed and uninterrupted, may be properly regarded as incomplete while their bodies are yet held under the power of the grave. The body is a part of the man. Christ has redeemed the bodies, as well as the souls, of his people. The soul must experience increased satisfaction from a reunion with the body, the companion of its former conflicts, sufferings, and joys; and such a reunion the power of Christ will effect.

The sleep into which Christians fall at the termination of this life, is not, as some hold death to be, an endless sleep. It respects only the body; and as to this, continues only till the end of the world, when there shall be the winding up of this earthly drama; these visible heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up. It will

continue till the second coming of Christ, to judge the world in righteousness, and decide the destinies of men for eternity. Then the dead will be raised from their graves, to slumber no more. "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

At the appearing of Christ, then, Christians will awake from the sleep of death. And it is an animating truth, that they will awake in Christ's likeness. Resembling him before in their souls, in the temper of their hearts, they will then be made to resemble him more especially in their bodies. Their bodies will not only be raised, but be renovated, purified, made spiritual bodies; and they will be rendered incorruptible, imperishable, and beauteous and glorious, as is the body of Christ. All this the Scriptures expressly teach. "Who shall

change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

III. *When believers shall thus arise in the likeness of Christ, their bliss shall be consummated.*

"I shall be *satisfied* when I awake with thy likeness." Raised in the likeness of Christ, believers will be satisfied with their *bodies*. These will thenceforth be vigorous, free from languor, and pain, and defilement; without defect or blemish; subject never more to disease, decay, or death. They will cause no more shame, though amid the society of angels, and in the immediate presence of Christ. The glorified body of believers will be not only immortal, but glorious, a fit companion of the glorified spirit, and a seat and source of its essential happiness. Their bodies will be all that the saints can desire.

They will be satisfied with *their souls*, as their souls will be purified from all sin and defilement, all evil propensities, passions, desires, and motives; from all sluggishness and dulness; will be ever wakeful, vigorous, and active; prepared to devote

every power with delight to the service of God, and to the employments of heaven. The souls of believers, in short, will be sanctified wholly: they will be perfectly conformed to Christ; and this will satisfy them.

They will be satisfied with the *place of their dwelling*, and with the *objects with which they shall be surrounded.* This abode must be glorious, and these objects mortals cannot describe. We know only that they must be grand beyond description, adapted to awaken admiration, and afford the greatest satisfaction. Among these objects, we are told, are the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, on either side of which is the tree bearing twelve manner of fruits. If this and other language descriptive of heaven is figurative, it certainly indicates pleasing objects. It is further said of that world, that the curse is not there; and there is no night there, and there is no need of the light of a candle, nor of the light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and his servants shall serve him. Believers will be satisfied with their home.

They will be satisfied with the *society* to which they shall be joined. They will be associated not only with the spirits of the just made perfect, the

redeemed of the Lord, but with the numerous orders of angels, from the lowest to the highest—the noblest of God's creatures, the bright armies of the skies.

They will see God and the Lamb. God himself will be with them, and they shall behold his face in righteousness. This is that which satisfies the creature, which is the saint's everlasting rest. None need aspire to higher felicity than is found in seeing God, and dwelling in his immediate presence. They will be satisfied with God, his attributes, government, and sovereignty, and with his past dispensations of providence and grace, and the decisions of the final judgment. They will be satisfied with the preciousness and the worthiness of the Lamb that was slain and has redeemed them to God by his blood. They will be satisfied when they shall, as it were, look into the heart of their Redeemer, and see there the love he bore to them from all eternity, and the love and good will he will bear to them for evermore.

They will be satisfied with their *employments*, while devoting all their powers in serving, worshipping, adoring, and praising God and Jesus Christ. They will never be weary while thus employed; in such employment they will glory, and it will be unspeakably delightful.

Glorified believers will be satisfied also with their *prospects*. Assured that their happiness, so far from terminating or being diminished, will continuously increase through the ceaseless ages of duration, as the hidden and deep things of God shall be unfolded to their view, they will desire nothing more; their enjoyment will be perfect.

Some practical remarks are naturally suggested by the subject.

1. *If Christians will be completely satisfied only when they shall have awaked with the likeness of Christ, then they should never seek to be satisfied with any thing short of conformity to him.* This is the mark at which they should aim, and towards which they should be ever pressing while they are here on the earth. The beggarly elements of this world, riches, honor, and pleasure, which perish with the using, as they do not promote the holiness of the soul, do not meet its wants. And while in this state, Christians should not seek mainly the enjoyments of even religion. Thankful for what of comfort they find in the path of duty, they should be anxious chiefly to be, and to do, what Christ requires. This world is not their rest, but a scene of toil; let them, therefore, deny themselves for Christ, and exert themselves to be holy, active, and useful rather than live merely for enjoyment. Let it be their care

to toil and strive, be imitators of their Lord, and faithful to him, waiting for rest till their change shall come.

2. *We may learn what gives a fair prospect for future blessedness.* It is not the mere hope of it, nor a mere profession of friendship to Christ. One may cherish hope, and profess to be a friend of Christ, and yet be a stranger to the spirit or mind that was in him. He who is not a disciple of Jesus, not being united to him, as he will not die in union with Christ, neither will he awake in his likeness.

Let a man have evidence that the love of self, of sin, and of the world is mortified; that he possesses the graces of humility, meekness, gentleness, self-denial, zeal for God, forbearance, forgiveness, love for men, even for enemies; that he prizes the knowledge of Christ, and has in him the same mind that was in Christ; and he may know that he has a prospect of a part in the bliss of heaven. Such an one is born again; and as he shall die in the Lord, he will awake with his likeness, and be satisfied thenceforth.

3. *They can have no part in the bliss of heaven who shall not, in this life, resemble Christ in their spirit and character.* It is not only unscriptural, but unreasonable, to speak or think of unbelievers,

unlike to Christ, as being in Christ, in such a sense that when they die, it can be said of them, that they die in the Lord. They are alienated from Christ; they reject him and have no interest in him; and hence when they die, Inspiration asserts, that they "die in their sins," and are "driven away in their wickedness." And death does not change character; the grave cannot purify the soul. "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still." As men are at death they will be in eternity. The trump of God will call forth the bodies of the wicked from their graves; still, it is declared, that they arise to "the resurrection of damnation." They will be separated from the righteous at the judgment, and be doomed to everlasting punishment, while the righteous shall be received to life eternal.

The wicked, having not the spirit of Christ, not dying in him, will not awake with his likeness, and will not be satisfied. The sinner, dying such, at the resurrection will be far from being satisfied with his reflections, with his condition, or with his prospects.

THE END.

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